



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

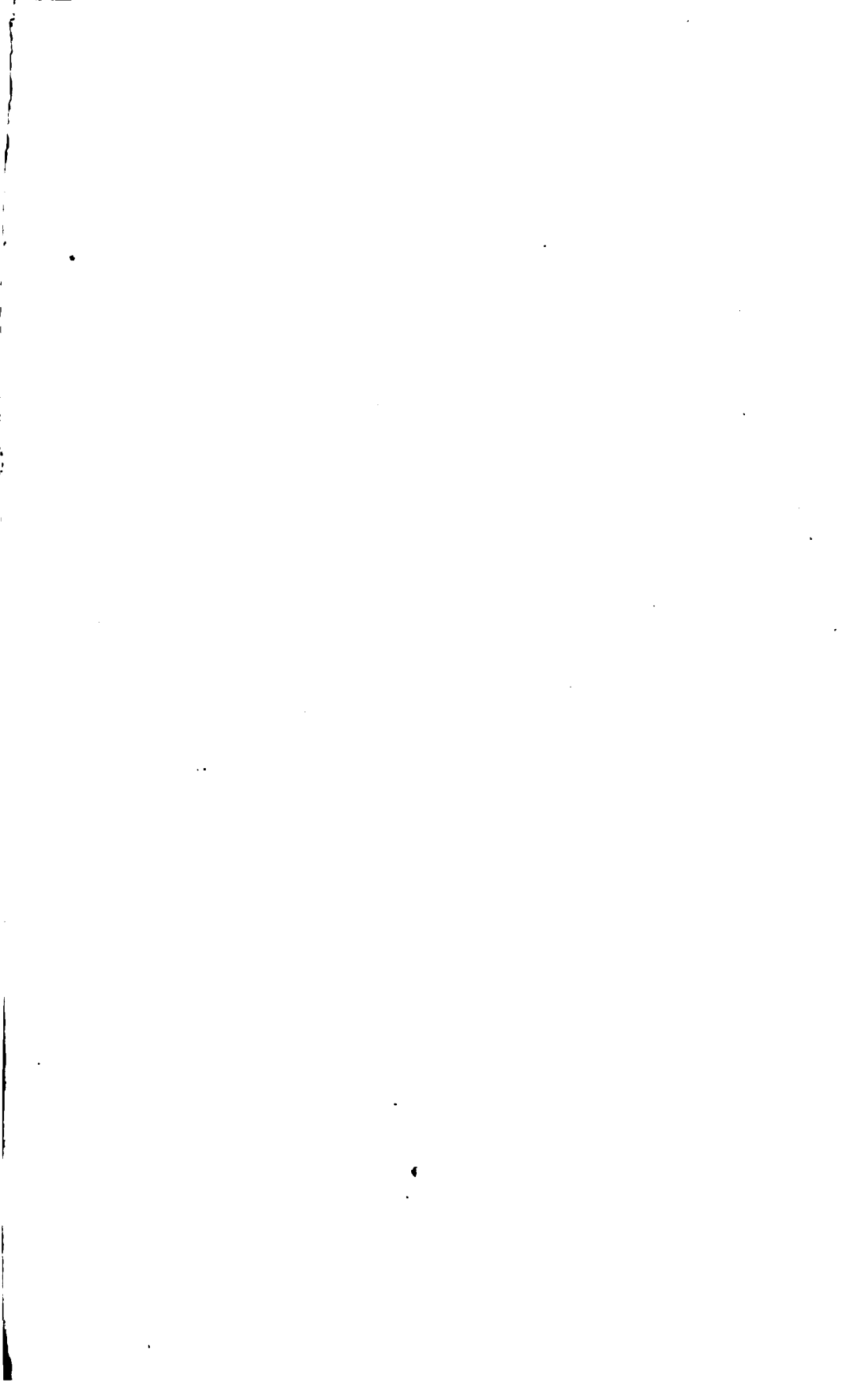
- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

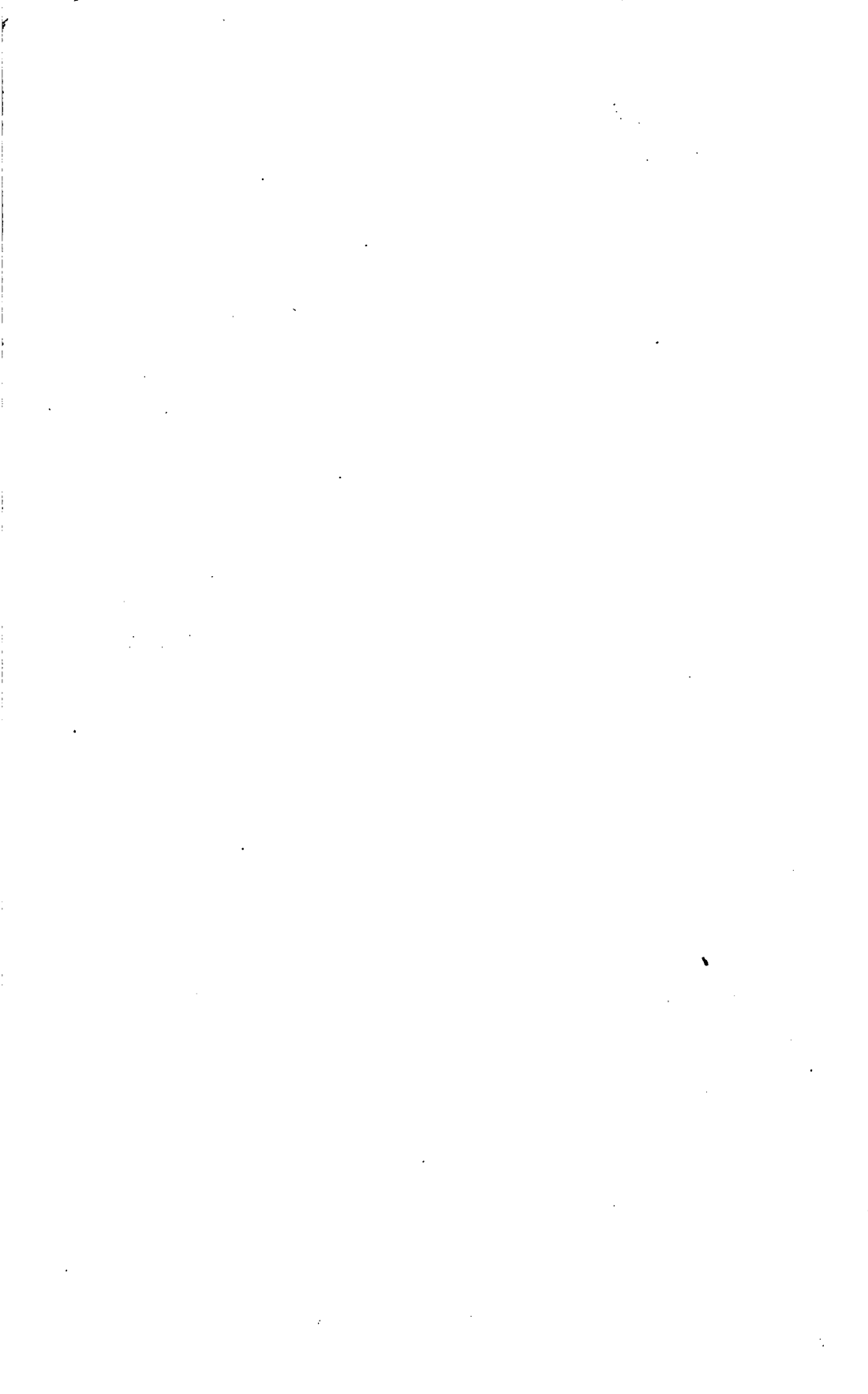
### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



47. 477.





ADDRESSED TO  
HIS GRACE  
THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH.  
THOUGHTS  
ON THE  
CAMEOS AND INTAGLIOS OF ANTIQUITY,  
SUGGESTED BY  
A SIGHT AND SURVEY  
OF  
THE BLENHEIM COLLECTION.  
BY  
A LOVER OF THE FINE ARTS.



---

54

Si qua sunt in universo Antiquitatum omnium generum Thesauro Monumenta.  
In quibus prisci artifices, facile luxuriantes, ingenii libertate uti sunt, Gemmaria  
Ars proculdubio primas tenet. Vide *Gemmas Astriferas, a Gorio in Praef.*

---

OXFORD,  
PRINTED BY W. BAXTER.  
1847.



**THOUGHTS**  
**ON THE**  
**CAMEOS AND INTAGLIOS OF ANTIQUITY,**  
**SUGGESTED BY**  
**A SIGHT AND SURVEY**  
**OF**  
**THE BLENHEIM COLLECTION.**

---

**PART I.**  
**ON ANTIQUE GEMS IN GENERAL.**





## PART I.

### ON ANTIQUE GEMS IN GENERAL.

---

TASTE, that undefined and indefinable something within us, be it the creature of feeling or the result of study, a natural endowment or an acquired habit, finds or forms materials for the exercise of its powers, it discovers substances whereon to develop its resources, and exhibit its ingenuity in every kingdom of the animate and inanimate world. The remark is not meant to apply to the subjects of a painter's or a sculptor's compositions, to the things presented to an artist's fancy or feeling by the earth, the sea, the sky, by all the phænomena and realities of things created. Most true and certain it is, that nature does in this way abundantly minister her sublime and beautiful stores to an artist's taste; but such things do not fall within the compass of the preceding observation, neither do they properly belong to the subject of the present paper; the materials here referred to are

Taste displays its power over the flint and pebble.

Pierres  
fines.

Instances  
of the Stones  
used by the  
great En-  
gravers of  
antiquity.

those which the industry of taste has discovered on the surface or within the recesses of the earth, which are to be handled by the hand, and to be fabricated by suitable implements into works of art; they are the pebbles of the mountain or the sea-shore, the flints of the cliff or the quarry, which, (though custom and commerce have forbidden us to call them precious stones,) have been named by the French *pierres fines*, but which should be rather called *pierres belles et bonnes pour la gravure*. But whatever be their denomination, they ought to rank high in our estimation as having been the favourites of the gifted Gem-engravers of the Greek and Roman Schools. It was on a Sardonyx that Tryphon carved the celebrated Cameo of the Marriage of Cupid and Psyche, in the Marlborough Collection. It is known that the subject of "*Diomedes in possession of the stolen Palladium*" has tried the skill of three of the greatest lapidary artists of antiquity, two of whom bear names famous for a very different sort of excellence, Solon and Dioscorides. Solon chose the Sard or Cornelian for his Intaglio of Diomedes; Dioscorides the same stone for the same subject; neither did Polycletus, the carver of the third Intaglio of Diomedes, make a different choice as to the material on which he worked; this similarity of choice, both as to the subject engraved and the mode of engraving, not being surprising, because Polycletus of Sicyon was the predecessor, if not the teacher, of the other two, and was closely imitated by them. Again, in that wonderful work of the Glyptic art, one of the finest

Gems in the Marlborough Collection, and which (like that of the Cupid and Psyche) was brought from Italy, about 1631, by that Earl of Arundel who was the father and founder of *virtu* in this country, Diomede is again the subject, not indeed as before, as if the hero were in the act of defending his prize against some unseen assailant, but here Ulysses himself is introduced in angry remonstrance with Diomede, and (agreeably to the story told in Suidas, *sub voc.* Διομηδείως ἀναγκή) prepared to strike and rob him of his booty; the stone chosen for this Intaglio is a Sardonyx. “*Love taming the Lion*,” by Plotarchus, in the Florentine Collection, is a Cameo worked out of a Sardonyx; the same subject, (by the artist Alexander,) once in the Morpeth Collection, and much more elaborately treated than in the former Gem, was likewise engraved on a Sardonyx. “*Hercules binding a Lion*,” by Dioscorides, in the King of Prussia’s Museum, is a Cameo on an Onyx. “*The sitting Faun*,” by Nischomachus, once in the Chevalier Odam’s Cabinet at Rome, but now in the Marlborough Collection, is an Intaglio cut out of a black Agate; “*The Achilles Citharædus*,” by Pamphilus, one of the wonders of the Duke of Devonshire’s Collection before it was dispersed, is carved *en creux* upon a Cornelian. The famous Intaglio called Michael Angelo’s Seal in the Royal Cabinet at Paris, which, within an oval of about an inch long, contains fifteen figures, most wonderful in attitude and *ordonnance*, is also cut out of Cornelian.

Instances might be cited without end to shew the sort of stones chosen by the ancient Gem-engravers

Agates,  
under one  
denomina-  
tion or  
another,  
generally  
used.

But it may be sufficient to observe, that Agates, under different names and modifications, such as Onyx, Sardonyx, Sard or Cornelian, Chalcedony, have at all times and in all countries supplied the Gem-workers with the substances best adapted to give effect to what was designed by their taste, and executed by their laborious skill. It was upon these beautifully veined and variously coloured stones that the tasteful and talented artificers of antiquity laid the foundations of their fame in works of high and low relief, of deep and shallow cuttings.

Agates dis-  
tinguished  
by the num-  
ber of their  
*couches* or  
strata.

These beautiful substances were also distinguished by the names of bicolor, tricolor, quadricolor, expressive of the number of beds or *couches*, two, three, and even four, in succession, which lay one under the other in the thickness of the stone, and which, in the hands of skilful cutters, became eminently serviceable, and produced the happiest effects, when in alto-relievos, particular parts became appropriately tinted, and so were brought out with a sort of natural colouring from the ground-work of the Gem. M. Marriette says (tom. i. p. 297.) that he saw at Prince Eugene's a Cameo of a Tiger, and that its skin was naturally coloured by the tints of the Agate—"j'avoue que je ne fus pas peu étonné de l'heureuse rencontre des couleurs de l'Agathe qui expriment si parfaitement celles de la peau de l'animal qu'on la croiroit peinte."

Seest thou the beauty of that veined stone?  
Those veins produce the beauty—they alone  
By orderly disorder give it grace,  
And by soft tints adorn its wavy face\*.

\* Ὅρᾱς τὸ κάλλος ὅσσον ἐστὶ τῆς λίθου  
'Εν ταῖς ἀτάκταις τῶν φλεβῶν εὐταξίαις.

It is not intended by these remarks to say that these were the only stones chosen ; the ancient Sculptors engraved also upon precious stones, on Amethysts, Topazes, Sapphires, Emeralds. The Marlborough Collection is enriched by specimens of this rare and costly description, but these may be considered exceptions to the general rule ; such costly specimens were executed probably for individuals of great wealth or high dignity ; the usual stones were Agates, and of Agates, the Cornelian and Sardonyx were so generally selected both for incision as Intaglios, and excision as Cameos, that it has been observed by a very exact writer, that in most collections of figured Gems eighty out of one hundred have been cut upon the Sardonyx and Cornelian.

Such then were the materials which taste, as by an enchanter's touch, or rather by the enchantment of an engraver's tool, changed into the most expressive portraits of poets, orators, and philosophers, of royal and noble personages, of all the celebrated men and women of antiquity. By the energies of most refined taste they were fashioned into exquisite compositions, historical, mythological, allegorical, into vivid representations of animal and vegetable life, into the correctest delineations of architectural design, the fullest developments of national customs and religious rites, of processions and ceremonies, sports and games ; so that the ancient Gems, considered as illustrations of classical antiquity, have supplied annotators, upon dark and doubtful passages in classical authors, with various

Precious stones were sometimes used.

Antique Gems serve to illustrate Greek, Roman, and other antiquities, and passages in classical authors.

They serve  
to improve  
the fine  
arts.

information to settle differences of opinion and remove obscurities. But with respect to the arts of painting and sculpture, and the cultivation of taste, and the teaching fine composition, sculptured Agates continue to be what the great masters of painting have pronounced them to be, what the great teachers of the art have shewn them to be, sources of most valuable and various instruction, both as to the theory of design and *la bella prattica*, the real practical beauty of execution.

Seek Nature's charms in works of ancient art;  
How sweet the harmony of every part !  
Seek thou the antique Gem, the Medal's face,  
Where all is fit, and all that fitness, grace <sup>b</sup>.—

The little  
Gem is as  
instructive  
as the life-  
size Statue,  
or the large  
reliefs in all  
that relates  
to Sculpture  
and Paint-  
ing.

And well have the Cameos and Intaglios of antiquity deserved the Poet's commendation; for though the work, (whether it be *en creux* or *en relief*,) be confined to a very narrow space, (one, two, sometimes three, very rarely four, inches wide,) and though, by reason of its necessary minuteness, it make not that direct, immediate, and powerful impression on the imagination and affections which is felt when we behold figures of life, or above life-size, in high or low relief, as on the frieze of the Parthenon, or when given to the eye on pedestals, as the Laocöon, the Belvedere Apollo, the Venus of Medici, still it remains an unquestionable fact, that in all that relates to anatomical truth, expressiveness of at-

<sup>b</sup> Sed juxta antiquos naturam imitabere pulchram  
Qualem forma rei propria, objectumque requirit  
Non te igitur lateant antiqua numismata, *gemmæ*.

See Dufresnoy's Art of Painting.

titude and aspect, gracefulness of drapery, and every other detail and accompaniment of fine workmanship, the Greek, Sicilian, and Roman artists were eminently distinguished, and especially in that simplicity of contour and composition and masterly *ordonnance*, which have ever made the study of antique Gems so serviceable for the settlement of the principles and the improvement of the practice of Painting and Sculpture.

In calling the Schools which have produced these wonders, Greek, Sicilian, Roman, I wish it to be understood that they had all a common origin in Greece, as the Schools of Greece had in Egypt and in the wisdom of the Egyptians, the common source of European Arts and Sciences. But it is not necessary to dwell upon the birth-place of this species of carving, nor to trace the changes it underwent from the time it was occupied upon the monstrosities of Egyptian Mythology to those eras of its perfection when Pyrgoteles had the glory of being appointed by Alexander the Great, his artificer of Gems, \*and when Augustus invited and patronized the Gem-engravers of Greece; my object is to press upon the lovers and patrons of the fine arts, and especially upon artists themselves, the importance of the study

Greek, Roman, Sicilian Schools of Gem-engraving had their origin in Egypt.

Alexander the Great and Augustus patronized the art of carving Gems.

\* Speaking of a Gem of Julius Cæsar, it is said of him by Jacob Bryant, the annotator to the first Volume of the Marlborough Gems, see Gem, No. 3. "summo fuisse in has artes studio—hinc signa, sigilla, et antiqui operis toreumata comparavit—quodque maximum est, idem, cum esset postea Dictator sex Dactylithecas, immensi (ut credibile est) pretii in Veneris Genitricis Æde conspexit." It is to be observed, that Mr. Bryant received this anecdote of Julius Cæsar from Pliny: see lib. xxxvii. ch. 1.



The importance of antique Gems, for the improvement of taste. Marriette's opinion.

Opinion of Gorius to the same effect.

of the antique in this particular branch of workmanship. For "herein<sup>d</sup>," (says Marriette,) "science is brought under the dominion of a noble and lovely simplicity, which suffers nothing to be placed before the eye but what is required for the elevation of our ideas."

And to the same effect Gorius in his Preface to the first volume of the Florentine Gallery. "What is there more pleasurable than the contemplation of the works of the artists of antiquity, and to behold shut up as it were within the narrow compass of a small, it may be a very small, gem, all the majesty of a vast design and most elaborate performance."

Opinion of Goriæus.

Neither must the testimony of another distinguished writer be omitted. "The art of engraving figures upon these minute stones was as much admired by the ancients as that other sort of laborious skill which formed full-sized statues out of brass or marble. It may be even said, that Gems, in their eyes, were of greater value, by reason of the extreme smallness of the stones, and a hardness which defied an iron tool, and submitted to nothing but the power of the diamond."

<sup>d</sup> La science y est soumise à une noble et aimable simplicité, qui n'ouvre aux yeux que ce qu'il faut pour élever les idées. Marriette's Pierres antiques gravés.

<sup>e</sup> Quid jucundius quam antiquorum artificum opera cernere—ac sæpe in parva vel minima gemma conclusam immensi operis majestatem contemplari. In Mus. Florentin. Præfatione.

<sup>f</sup> Non enim in minutis hisce lapidibus scalpendarum imaginum ars minori admirationi veteribus fuit quam ea quæ signa ærea et marmorea grandiora simulachra effingebat, imo pretium augere videbatur minima lapillorum forma ac durities ferrum admittere recusans et solo adamante expugnabilis. Goriæi Dactyliotheca ad fin.

In short, it may be safely affirmed, that the Gem-<sup>Praise of the Gem-</sup> engravers of the Alexandrian and Augustan ages<sup>engravers of the Alexandrian and Augustan ages.</sup> were in all the excellencies of design and composition, that is, in all those parts and principles of their art which admit of comparison, rivals of the most celebrated artificers in Egyptian porphyry, Parian marble, or Corinthian brass, however large the dimensions of their works or perfect the finish of their workmanship. These wonderful lapidaries contrived to enclose within the narrowness of a little Agate-stone all the complicated details of an event in History, or a fable in Mythology, and to make them to stand forth in beautiful relief as a Cameo, or to sink down as beautifully into cavity as an Intaglio, with all the truth of design and power of expression and delicacy of execution, which characterize the excellence of the largest works of the most consummate artists. Great indeed must have been his taste and talent, his power and patience, who could make a small-sized Onyx or Cornelian bear on its surface or within its substance all those realities of place, person, and thing, which belong to historical events or fabulous traditions. It is Seneca's observation<sup>\*, Seneca's observation.</sup> that "to enclose a whole within a small space is the act of a great artist." Neither will it be out of place to cite Sir Joshua Reynolds (see Discourse 11th)<sup>Sir Joshua Reynolds.</sup> upon the importance of making this "*whole*" congruous and consistent. "Excellence," says he, "in every part and in every province of our art, from the highest style of History down to the resemblances of still-life, will depend on this power of extending the

\* Magni artificis est clausisse totum in exiguo. Seneca, Epist. 53.

attention at once to 'the whole,' without which the greatest diligence is vain." The Gem-artists of antiquity, besides their other claims upon our admiration, had regard to uniformity of design, to congruity and consistency throughout the *whole work*; they took care that all its parts were well-fitted and compactly distributed and disposed, and in all their fulness and effect.

The Gem-artists had regard to the effect of "the whole" as well as to the details; every thing was congruous and well composed.

Such being the characteristics of these elaborate but minute sculptures, (many of which are most eloquent and poetical,) it was to be expected, that as soon as their perfections had become matters of study, they would operate beneficially upon public taste, lead to improvements in the imitative arts, and serve as laws or lessons to teach or control the artist, or as models by which he might form or reform his practice. Such anticipations were in fact realized upon the revival of the fine arts in the fifteenth century. The influence of antique Gems in their effects upon painting and sculpture during this period is well attested by Leonardo Agostino, in his *Discorso sopra le Gemme antiche*, prefixed to his celebrated work "*Gemme antiche figurate*," published at Rome 1657; he says<sup>a</sup>, "that Gems are most highly prized in this our age, not only by reason of the consent and approval of learned men, but on account of the praises bestowed upon them by painters and

Effect of the study of Gems on the fine arts upon their revival in the fifteenth century.

A remark of Leonardo Agostino upon the subject.

<sup>a</sup> Nell' età nostra le gemme sono pregiatissime nel consenso di tutti gli eruditi et nelle lodi attribute gli da Pittori et da Scultori, havendo il Raffaello da Urbino, Giulio Romano, Michael Angelo Buonaroti et Polidoro ritrovato in così piccioli esempi, argomenti grandissimi della loro arte.

sculptors; for Raffaello, Michael Angelo, Giulio Romano, Polidoro, discovered in the minute labours of these little Gems, some of the grandest and most important rules and principles of their art."

Neither will it be out of place to remind the reader, that Leonardo undertook his laborious work at the instance of his friend the celebrated painter Andrea Sacchi, and for the express purpose of assisting painters and sculptors in their professional studies. "I ought not (says Agostini) to omit the authority of Andrea Sacchi, the worthy painter of Modena, in respect of these praises of antiquity, for it was he who prevailed upon me to undertake this work on figured Gems, in order to give assistance to the arts of painting and sculpture."

It was Andrea Sacchi who persuaded Agostino to publish his work for the use of artists.

But the value and importance of the antique figured Gems, as auxiliary means of instruction in the sister arts, or rather sciences of painting and sculpture, ought not to be made to rest upon the judgment of Andrea Sacchi, or the testimony of Agostini, when the authorities of some of the greatest patrons and proficients in these departments of taste may be adduced to establish what may be called the pictorial and sculptural usefulness of antique Gems.

Lorenzo de' Medici founded his Academy for the study of the antique, about 1458, (Smyth, Dact. vol. ii. p. 132.) There was in his gardens at Florence a building called the *Casino di San Marco*, in which he esta-

Lorenzo de' Medici founded a Schola Glyptographica in his garden at Florence.

Io non debbo lasciare di aggiungere l'autorità del Signor Andrea Sacchi, degno Pittore di Modena sulle lodi degli antichi; il quale m'a promosso a tale impresa, con fine di apportare giovamento alla pittura, e alla scultura.

blished his "Schola Glyptographica" for the especial study of Gems and Gem-engraving. It was the fine taste and sound judgment of Lorenzo which led him "to lay before artists the most celebrated Gems of antiquity for their study and imitation, to the intent that assiduously contemplating them, they might with equal assiduity retain the elegance and dignity of style which they had felt and perceived, and try with all the strength of their genius, to raise themselves up to the attainment of similar excellence."

Gem en-  
gravers  
from that  
School,  
Alessandro  
Cesare or  
Cesarti, and  
others.

Vasari gives the names of many distinguished artists, who did honour to the school, such as Giovanne delle Corniuole, Domenico dei Camei, Alessandro Cesar or Cesarti, surnamed *il Maestro Greco*, of whose Phocion, (which is in the Marlborough Collection, vol. i. No. 28. and is the only one not of antique workmanship in the whole Series,) Vasari writes, "there are many Cameos cut by his hand . . . but that which surpassed all the rest was the head of the Athenian Phocion; it was an astonishing performance, the finest Cameo that was ever seen." It is not necessary to refer to more of the engravers from that school, nor to the schools of engraving formed at Rome, and in other parts of Italy, and in Germany,

\* "Insignium Gemmarum antiquarum Exempla proposuit Laurentius Medicæus," (vid. Dactyliotheca Smithiana, vol. ii. p. 133.) "eo consilio, ut novi sui Gymnasii alumni ea assidue contemplantes, antiquorum operum elegantiam, dignitatem mente conceptam assidua retinerent et ad eam assequendam omnibus ingenii viribus assurgerent." (Ibid. p. 99.)

<sup>1</sup> Vedesi ancora molti altri intagli di suo mano in Camei . . . ma quello che passo tutti, fu la testa di Fotione Ateniese, che e miracolosa et il piu bello cammeo che si possa vedere.

France, the Netherlands, England, which may be considered as so many colonies from the Medicean Institution.

But it must be observed, that in establishing his school for teaching the Glyptic art, Lorenzo de' Medici saw that a Museum of antique Gems was a fit and necessary accompaniment, and the result of his indefatigable endeavours and extensive researches and costly purchases, in this great undertaking, was the formation of that collection of *Gemmæ Antiquæ in Dactyliotheca Medicæa*, which was published, in the first two volumes of the *Musæum Florentinum*, in 1731, under the editorship of the celebrated Gorius.

But this is a very narrow view of the usefulness of these precious monuments of ancient taste; they do not only promote improvements in Gem-engraving, but wherever beauty or sublimity of design is required, and fine composition, and a style of workmanship simple but not homely, striking but not ostentatious, severe but still graceful; whether wood, marble, brass, or canvass, be the surface or substance upon which Genius has chosen to exercise its power, the sculptured Agate of antiquity will be sure to supply suggestions and ideas, ministerial to the artist's skill, raising the tone of his taste and enlarging the field of his observation, and in many ways contributing to the success and perfection of his performance.

It has been already observed, that Gems have done important service to classical literature; they have been useful in the explanation of passages in

The Medicean Collection of Gems.

The study of antique Gems universally serviceable for the improvement of works of art.

The study of antique Gems useful to explain passages in classical authors, and improve our knowledge of Greek and Roman antiquities.

Greek and Roman writers. "Gems" (says Gori in his preface to the Florentine gallery) are most noble works of art, not merely for the elegance of their workmanship, but also for the erudition they contain." And again<sup>a</sup>, "how great the aids and the ornaments conferred by Gems upon the republic of letters."

They throw a strong and clear light upon every part of Greek and Roman Archæology. The sacrifices and other religious ceremonies of Greece and Rome, their games, festivals, processions, dresses, warfare, in short all their habits and customs, religious, civil, military, derive from these sculptures more ready and real illustration than any which verbal criticism or conjectural commentary can afford. Critics, therefore, and commentators have wisely had recourse to the figured and lettered Gem to help explanation and remove obscurity. In this way many a passage in the Poets, Orators, and Historians of classical antiquity has been made, not merely intelligible, but allusive and emphatic; it has been developed in many an interesting relation to times and places, persons and things connected with the subject-matter of the passage. From these sources, History, Mythology, and Allegory, have received verifications in matters of fact, elucidations in matters of fable, and interpretations in matters of type and symbol, whilst a livelier interest has been given to the Biographies

History,  
Mythology,  
Allegory,  
have been  
explained  
or illus-  
trated by  
Gems.

<sup>a</sup> Gemmæ non opificio solum verum etiam ob eruditionem quam continent sunt nobilissimæ. Mus. Florent. in Præf. Tom. II.

<sup>a</sup> Quantum utilitatis et ornamenti afferunt Literarum Reipublicæ. Ibid. in Præf. Tom. I.

of the imperial, royal, and noble personages of Greece and Rome, as also to the lives of their philosophers and poets, heroes and statesmen, by reason of the profiles or front-faces, busts or full-lengths, which have been so faithfully and expressively recorded, either by incision or excision upon the Cornelian, the Sardonyx, Chalcedony, or other Gem-stones of antiquity.

Much might be said in continuation upon the subsidiary information so supplied to the learned in their investigations of matters appertaining to verbal criticism or historical truth in some of their many branches and relations, and references might be made to editions of classical authors, adorned as well as illustrated by vignettes, and other pictures of antique Gems; but to adduce special proofs of their instructiveness in this way, would be to plunge into the depths of erudition, rather than ramble over those pleasant fields, to which taste invites the lovers of the antique.

The beautiful workmanship of the Gem, however useful to the critic or chronologist, belongs in its most appropriate instructiveness to the fine arts. Without detracting from its power or profitableness when employed by scholars in their prosecution of some learned speculation or research, it must be said, that its greatest service, in the way of instruction, has been found to consist in its having largely contributed (together with other relics of ancient taste and skill) to give a new turn of thought, to suggest a different course of study, to encourage a happier application of talent, and finer

Editions of the Classics have been illustrated by pictures of Gems.

But the study of the antique in Gems more especially belongs to the artist for the improvement of taste.



imitations of nature, and nobler exhibitions of sculptural and pictorial power among painters and sculptors. These are the relations (relations which embrace the studies of artists, and what may be called the philosophy as well as practice of all the arts imitative) which more especially claim consideration. As an important branch of Greek and Roman art, Glyptolithy (if it be permitted to change the word Glyptography for one more appropriate) presents examples the most various, authorities the most absolute, models the most excellent, for the correction of what is bad, and the improvement of what is good, in the art of design, and in the principles and practice of painting and sculpture.

Strong as these praises may appear, they do not exceed the representations of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who places the Cameo and Intaglio upon the same footing with the larger monuments of ancient genius, as models for the rectification of what is wrong, the restoration of what is decayed, the revival of what is dead, in the state or condition of the fine arts. "We must not," says he, "rest contented, even in this general study of the moderns; we must trace back the art to its fountain head, to that source from whence they drew their excellencies, the monuments of antiquity. All the inventions and thoughts of the ancients, whether conveyed to us in Statues, Bas-reliefs, Intaglios, Cameos, or Coins, are to be sought after and carefully studied; the genius that hovers over these venerable relics may be called the father of modern art. From the remains of the works of the ancients the modern arts were revived, and it is

Confirmation of what has been said by the authority of Sir Joshua Reynolds.

by their means that they must be restored a second time. However it may mortify our vanity, we must be forced to allow them our masters, and we may venture to prophesy, that when they shall cease to be studied, arts will no longer flourish, and we shall again relapse into barbarism." (Discourse vi.) Such then is the use of Gems, as one of the most instructive branches of ancient workmanship for teaching sculptors and painters, simplicity of design, elegance of contour, congruity of parts in composition, anatomical truth in attitude, and fine poetry in aspect and expression of countenance.

But it must be farther shewn, that the great masters of the Italian and other schools of painting acted under the conviction, that what was theoretically true, scientifically correct, and naturally beautiful in these ancient sculptures, was also practically profitable for instruction and improvement; that what might be inferred and concluded as principles from these minute monuments of intellectual and manual talent, might be converted into rules of art, and realized in modern works of taste and genius. It was this practical and professional usefulness of the *antiche Gemme figurate*, which induced the celebrated painter Andrea Sacchi to request his friend Leonardo Agostini to copy and publish his series of Gems, and to employ the best engraver of Rome, Gallestruzzi, that the copies of them might faithfully represent the perfections of the originals.

The authority of the great masters on the instructiveness of the antique Gems.

Andrea Sacchi prevailed on Leonardo Agostini to publish the pictures of Gem-engravings for the use of artists.

It was the same conviction of the subserviency of such studies to the improvement of pictorial and sculptural compositions which determined Rubens

Rubens began a work of the same sort for the same purpose.

himself to enter upon a similar undertaking; and though his Herculean labours, as a painter, prevented his prosecution of the design, he did enough to shew the judgment he had formed upon the benefits which artists might derive from engraved copies of antique Cameos of superior excellence. What may be called the first and only number of his publication is entitled, "*Commencement d'un recueil d'Estampes d'après des Camées antiques, projeté par Pierre Paul Reubens d'Anvers*;" here too, as in Agostini's work, it was deemed of the utmost importance to secure the services of the best engravers, and Paul Pontius and Luke Vosterman have carefully delineated what Rubens had committed to the fidelity of their skill.

The great masters on the revival of the art of painting took thoughts and subjects from Gems.

That the great masters of the early schools of painting and sculpture actually did adopt in their practice, and apply to their use, some of those forms of beauty, and fine thoughts, and felicities of aspect and attitude, which they discovered in the groupes or single figures, cut *en creux* or *en relief*, on Gems, is a fact to be established by a close inspection of their works under the light thrown upon them by the Gem-engravings of antiquity.

Michael Angelo's celebrated Seal.

Michael Angelo did not only prize his celebrated Cornelian Intaglio, (*il en faisoit*, says Marriette, *son cachet et ses delices*\*,) but he gave other proofs of his admiration of it. The gracefulness of two females in

\* Illa toto orbe famosissima gemma quæ a digitis Michaelis Angeli Bonarotii, in digitos Christianissimi Galliarum Regis Magni Ludovici XIV tanto honore et dignitate digna, feliciter migravit. Dactyliotheca Smyth. pars ii. p. 131.

the Vintage-festival, (for such is the subject of the seal,) was by him so highly thought of as a chef d'œuvre for elegant simplicity of form and attitude, that he introduced them into one of his principal pictures. *Sensible a des beautés si touchantes le grand Michel Ange n'a pas fait difficulté d'introduire ces deux figures dans un de ses meilleurs tableaux*; and in another place, *A-t-on fait un crime à Michel Ange d'avoir prit de son propre cachet ce groupe de deux femmes dont une charge une corbeille sur la tête de sa compagne, pour en faire dans le plafond de la chapelle de Sixte IV au Vatican une Judith qui sort de la tente d'Holopherne avec sa suivante.* (Marriette, tom. i. p. 79. tom. ii. p. 47.) Neither is it to be doubted but that a careful comparison of the figured compositions engraved on the antique Gems of the Roman and Florentine Collections, as they existed in his time, with M. Angelo's paintings and *figures d'étude*, would lead to the discovery of many other adoptions and imitations; they are perceptible in his *disegni* M. Angelo profited by what he saw on the other Gems of the Bacchanalian, Hercules Victor, Death of Meleager, Venus and Cupid, Hercules and the Centaur, Prometheus, subjects which, as they —In—stances. were borrowed from heathen mythology, admitted, or rather required, the guidance of the ancient authorities for the right treatment of them, and as Gems supplied the greatest amount and variety of such information, to them he would naturally have recourse to assist his own conceptions.

It is well known, that in the practice of Raffaello, Raffaello's love of the antique—his collections. it was the study of the antique which took him off from the hard outline and dry manner of the

old Schools of painting, and from whatever of dryness and hardness adhered to the style of his master Pietro Perugino. "The collection of the thoughts of the ancients" which Raffaelle made with so much trouble, is a proof of his opinion on this subject," and that unparalleled collection of the *Disegni* of Raffaelle, and M. Angelo, ("the most precious of the things pictorial deposited in the new Gallery of the University of Oxford, and honourable proofs of what may be effected by the fearless enterprize and free contributions of individuals,) goes very far to prove the devotion both of M. Angelo and Raffaelle to the study of the antique. In these *Disegni*, as well as in Landon's outlined engravings of the pictures and drawings of these Fathers of the sublime and beautiful, the true and natural, the simple and severe, in painting and sculpture, are to be found not only decisive evidences of their studious attention to the antique generally, but traces also of what they had admired, learned, imitated, adopted from the carved Gems of antiquity.

The *Disegni* of M. Angelo and Raffaelle in the Oxford Gallery shew their love of the antique.

Raffaelle was indebted to the carved Gems of antiquity for thoughts and suggestions especially on subjects allegorical, fabulous, mythological.

To confine these remarks to Raffaelle, he was as largely indebted as his great cotemporary on all subjects allegorical, fabulous, and mythological, to the things which he had beheld on antique Cameos and

<sup>p</sup> Sir Joshua Reynolds, Lect. VI.

<sup>q</sup> Foreign Princes sought for the purchase of them. Mr. Woodburn's good will to his country, its artists, and their studies, led him to seek a purchaser at home; private subscriptions in the University, crowned by the Earl of Eldon's splendid donation of £4000, secured to the Academic Gallery 87 *Disegni* of M. Angelo, and 190 of Raffaelle, for the sum of £7300.

Intaglios, or to the thoughts generated by the sight and study of them; and it must be borne in mind, that at the time these great men were struggling against the thralldom which still continued to fetter genius, it happened as a most happy coincidence, that the attention of the great and wealthy had been drawn to whatever antiquity had left as monuments of pristine superiority in works of art.

It was in the days of Lorenzo de' Medici, that there arose at Florence, and shortly afterwards at Rome, an universal admiration of those sublime and graceful forms which had been buried in ruins by the ravages of Goths and Vandals, but which had been rescued from decay by the reviving energies of taste. It was then, and in that great and general outbreak of the love of literature and the fine arts, that there arose in rapid succession strenuous searches after the relics of antiquity, and costly purchases, and large collections, and careful deposits of bronzes, marbles, Gems in the cabinets of Princes, and especially in the Museum at Florence; neither was this all: for what had been recovered by these noble exertions, was submitted to the artist's study with the nobler purpose of improving his taste, and carrying painting and sculpture to their highest perfection. With respect to Gems, they were made the special studies of what were called the Glyptographic schools; so intense was the admiration felt, as soon as the labours of the engravers of the Alexandrian and Augustan ages came to be contemplated, by the improved taste, judgment, and spirit of the Medicean age.

It has been thought right to introduce these ob-

Public attention and the artist's studies had been directed to antique Cameos and Intaglios by Lorenzo de' Medici.

Cabinets of Gems formed—the Museum Florentinum.

A Glyptographic school, in the Casmo di San Marco at Florence and other places.

servations, to shew, that in those days the attention of all who sought for fame and reward by works of art, had been specially directed to these treasures of antiquity, so that without the enumeration of instances, to prove that this or that antique Gem had supplied or suggested this or that particular thought to the painter or the sculptor, it may be taken for granted, that M. Angelo and Raffaele, ardent admirers and resolute imitators of the antique and bold reformers of the mediæval style, would not be so wanting to themselves nor to their heroic undertaking, as to withhold their most earnest attention and study from the masterly performances of the ancient Lithographers. But it so happens that instances abound in the works of Raffaele, as in those of M. Angelo, for the confirmation of what might have been concluded *a priori* from the general admiration of the Gem-sculptures which prevailed in their time, and from the special encouragement given to the study of them by the great patrons of the fine arts in those days. It may be said of all Raffaele's paintings and drawings, (as it has been already observed of M. Angelo's,) that whenever the subjects of them have been taken from heathen mythology, allegory, fable, or the history of the heroic ages, the painter is more or less indebted to the Gem-engravers of the golden ages of the Glyptic art. Proofs may be found in Landon's *gravures en trait* of Raffaele's works that it was his practice to make his own, what he felt to be natural and beautiful, congruous and expressive in the works of the ancients, whether they were great or small, statues or reliefs, sunk or raised sculptures on

Instances  
in the  
works of  
Raffaele to  
shew that  
he also was  
assisted in  
his compos-  
itions by  
his know-  
ledge of  
antique  
Gems.

'Gems. Upon this point the testimony of Marriette is of universal application. (*Tom. i. p. 79.*) *Raffaelle a été toute sa vie le sectateur de l'antique...je veux bien convenir encore que lorsqu'il s'est présenté dans l'antique quelque figure, quelque groupe, quelque pensée qui a piqué le gout de Raffaelle ce grand peintre n'a pas craint de s'en servir....Il est permis a d'aussi grands hommes de saisir ainsi de l'antique; ce n'est point le copier;...ce n'est plus qu'une simple traduction; c'est emprunter une Idee heureuse, pour lui donner un tour nouveau et plus brillant encore que celui de l'original.* Marriette i. p. 79. The thirty-one drawings of the story of Cupid and Psyche from Apuleius, (*Landon plate 72.* and the following,) are composed after the manner of Tryphon's Cameo of Cupid and Psyche<sup>r</sup>.

Farther proof of his imitations of the ancient Glyptographic style and manner are to be found in those paintings *en camayeux*, or Cameo-paintings with which some of the apartments of the Vatican are decorated; in these Cameos, as they are called, the subjects are made to stand out by means of a skilful chiaro-oscuro, like carved work. Landon in his engravings of Raffaelle's Works gives eighteen of them. They are the *Disegni* from which the artists worked, and consist of things fanciful and fabulous, Dancers, Sacrifices, Tritons, Fauns, Nereids, Sea-

Raffaelle's story of Cupid and Psyche and his designs for the Cameo paintings of the Vatican shew imitations of antique Gems.

<sup>r</sup> It is but a trifle, but still worth remarking—Raffaelle adopted the curving, curly termination of the little wings of the boy holding the basket of fruit over the heads of Cupid and Psyche in Tryphon's Gem; he gave these curls to the wings of his winged boys, *dans les ornemens qu'il a peints au Vatican.* (*Gemmæ antiquæ per Stosch. et Picart. p. 97.*)



Monsters, but all after the antique, and many of them imitations of Gems. Without adducing more instances, all the mythological subjects of the Cameos of the Vatican designed by Raffaele, (and they are very numerous,) together form a body of evidence, which goes to shew, what it has been the end and aim of this paper to establish, that the great masters of painting, on its revival from its torpid and almost lifeless state in the middle and later ages, derived much of their love of what was truthful and natural, simple and suitable, expressive and pathetic, in design and workmanship, from the study of those sculptured stones which Princes had collected in their cabinets, and which, as patrons of the fine arts, they had proposed for imitation in their academies.

Julio Romano, Polidoro, the Caracci's, Poussin, Rubens, profited by the inspection and study of the ancient Cameos and Intaglios.

It would be to prolong these proofs beyond the necessity to enter farther upon the adoptions and imitations of Gem-subjects by other great masters, admirers of the lithographic wonders of ancient art, such as Julio Romano, Polidoro, the Caracci's, Poussin, and Rubens, and others; this part of the subject will be dismissed with what M. Marriette (tom. i. p. 35.) relates of Annibal Caracci, "*Il a emprunté de deux pierres gravées antiques les pensées de deux de ses plus beaux tableaux du Cabinet du Palais Farnese a Rome—l'Hercule qui porte le ceil est une imitation d'une Gemme antique qui est chez le Roi—le même Heros se reposant de ses travaux s'éloigne peu d'une Cornaline qui a appartenu à Fulvius Ursinus, (Recueil de M. Gravelle, Plate 40.) c'est précisément le même sujet, la même composition, la même intention de figure—le Carrache en a transcrit*

*jusqu'à cette admirable sentence qu'on y lit . . . ΠΟΝΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΛΟΣ · ΗΣΤΥΧΑΖΕΙΝ ΑΙΤΙΟΣ* *ce qui signifie que la source du bonheur et de la tranquillité est dans le travail.*"—Marriette. But the inscription upon this Cornelian not only serves to identify the Gem copied by Annibal Caracci, it also points out the high and honourable motives which led the graver of antiquity to dedicate his bodily and intellectual power, his skilful hand, and consummate taste, his severity of judgment and unwearied perseverance to these minute labours, labours which so painfully tried the eyes, that according to Pliny the artist was obliged to refresh them from time to time by gazing on the verdure of the emerald<sup>†</sup>.

Such then are the observations, lengthened far beyond what was originally intended, which a sight and survey of the Blenheim Cameos and Intaglios ministered to one who saw in these beautiful Gems the elements of various information upon points of classical literature and historical research, sources of delight to the lovers of the fine arts, and a rich abundance of materials for the supply of happy thoughts to the artist, and also of laws and lessons for his guidance in doing as well as designing his work. The stones themselves, beautiful in form and

\* ΚΑΛΟΣ pro ΚΑΛΩΣ—it admits of a fuller translation.

A two-fold blessing from hard labour flows,  
It sweetens and ennobles man's repose!

† Quin et ab intentione obscurata, aspectu Smaragdi recreatur acies—scalpentibus gemmas, non alia gratior oculorum refectio est—ita viridi lenitate lassitudinem mulcent. Plin. Pat. Hist. lib. xxxvii. c. 5.

colour; some precious, all valuable, the Topaz, Sapphire, Emerald, Amethyst, Lapis Lazuli, the Agate, Cornelian, Onyx, Sardonyx, Chalcedony, Garnet, first claimed consideration, and then the uses of these relics of ancient art, considered as records of events in distant ages, as representations of customs, civil, military, and religious, as portraits of celebrated persons male and female, as elucidations of things symbolical, fabulous, and mythological, in like manner claimed some cursory notice, whilst their pictorial and sculptural uses for chastening the licentiousness of taste, for creating a love of truth and nature, for coupling the great and the beautiful in design with the simple in style, the graceful in contour, and the harmonious in composition, demanded as of right a fuller exposition.

This particular view of the uses of these Gems gave rise to the question, when it was discovered that antique Cameos and Intaglios contained within them such seeds of instruction, and stores of knowledge, for the direction of the great reformed and reforming masters of painting and sculpture in their triumphant endeavours to disengage the hearts and hands of artists from the entanglements of antecedent practice. The answer was found in the glory of the Medicæan age, and in the things which the magnificent Lorenzo de' Medici was able to accomplish for the reformation of the principles of taste, by the acquisition of all the antique Marbles, Bronzes, Gems, which could be purchased by his money or procured by his influence. Neither was his noble desire to promote the acquirement of a pure taste

and sound judgment in works of art satisfied by the mere possession of these antiques; he proposed them as models for the imitation of the moderns; he made them available for such purposes by suitable schools of instruction, by teachers well-trained in the knowledge of the antique, and by the institution of a museum for the exhibition of the statues and reliefs, the Cameos and Intaglios, whose beauties he was wont to press upon the admiration of the artist, and whose perfections he proposed to their ambition.

From Lorenzo's patronage and the consequent spread of a juster estimate of the excellence of Greek and Roman workmanship, and of an exacter knowledge of what had been achieved by that workmanship in the cavities or on the prominences of the sculptured stone, there arose a noble competition among the reformed masters of painting and sculpture, who should be able most effectually to disengage his drawings, frescos and oil paintings, from all that was stiff, hard, and dry in the traditionary style of the elder labourers. In the fore-front of these emancipators of the fine arts from the hard mastership of prejudice and established practice, stood arrayed in the strength of truth, the beauty of nature, the fire of genius, and the gracefulness of taste, Michael Angelo and Raffaello. Their works were therefore referred to specially in proof of what it has been the writer's endeavour to establish, namely, the profitableness of these studies for teaching unity of design, delicacy of execution, simple, natural, truthful composition in painting and sculpture.

Second part  
of these  
'Thoughts'  
will refer  
exclusively  
to the Blenheim  
Collection.

With respect to the second part of these THOUGHTS, it is reserved to shew how great and various is the instruction derivable from the antique sculptures of the BLENHEIM Collection, in furtherance of the studies of the academy. Bouchardon, a celebrated sculptor and architect in the early part of the eighteenth century, declared, *qu'il n'avoit jamais considéré les pierres graveés sans en tirer beaucoup de fruit*, and without exaggerating the instructiveness of the Dactyliothecæ Marlboroughenses, and without over estimating the usefulness of the figures, groups, and compositions carved on those Gems to help on the increasing love of the antique and the improvement of all works of art, (whatever be the surface or the substance, natural or artificial, on or out of which the work is executed,) it may be truly said, that if in addition to the SELECTION of those Gems which was printed 1783, but never published, a second Selection were made out of the abundance of these treasures, or if the original SELECTION alone were reprinted, (but not as was done in 1783 exclusively for presentation to friends,) a most acceptable service would be done to Classical literature and the fine arts; to Classical literature, by publishing the lucubrations of the profound scholar Jacob Bryant, and his learned colleague Dr. William Cole, Prebendary of Westminster, on the subjects of the selected Gems—to the Fine arts, by exhibiting what Cipriani so faithfully copied, and Bartolozzi so beautifully engraved, and by making the results of this great combination of taste and talent accessible to artists and the lovers of the fine arts by purchase.

## PART II.

ON THE UNPUBLISHED WORK, ENTITLED,

*Gemmarum antiquarum Delectus ex præstantioribus  
desumptus, quæ in Dactyliotheçis Ducis Marl-  
buriensis conservantur. 2 tom. folio.*

*Choix de Pierres antiques gravées du Cabinet du Duc  
de Marlborough.*

---

THIS DELECTUS, of which no more than one hundred copies were struck off for presents to friends, contains one hundred copper-plate engravings (fifty in each Vol.) of some of the best and most beautiful Gems of the Blenheim Collection *ex præstantioribus quæ in Dactyliotheçis Ducis Marlburgiensis conservantur* \*.

\* The Latin descriptions of the fifty Gems of the First Volume were written by that elegant scholar and ardent explorer of antiquity, Jacob Bryant, Esq. ; the Latin descriptions of the fifty Gems of the Second Volume were from the classical pen of the Rev. William Cole, D.D. Prebendary of Westminster, originally Scholar and Fellow of King's Coll. Camb., who in 1775 (when Sir W. Browne's Prize Medals were first offered) gained one for his Greek Ode, and again in 1776 for a Greek Epigram ; his *Oratio de Ridiculo* gained another Prize. With respect to the French translation, that too was the work of two hands ; the translator of the First Volume was Mr. Maty, once a Clergyman of the Church of England, who became an Assistant Librarian of the British Museum. He received £100 and a Copy of the Work for his easy labours. The Second Volume was translated by the Rev. Lewis Dutens, author of the *Itineraire* and other works, and well qualified for his employment by an easy style of writing, much general information, and especially by his knowledge as an antiquary.

It made its appearance in 1783, if indeed this can be said of a Work which was studiously withheld from the sight and perusal of the public at large, and whose title-page, to speak bibliographically, is *sine loco, sine anno, sine prelo*; for from one end of the Work to the other no trace is to be found of the place where, nor the time when, it was printed, nor of the press from which it issued, nor of the learned men who wrote the Latin dissertations upon each Gem, nor of those who translated the Latin into French.

These omissions are the more remarkable, because there never was a work of this sort more honourably distinguished by authorship, as well as workmanship, by the beauty of its typography, the erudition shewn in the descriptions of the sculptured Gems, the elegant terseness of the Latinity, the purity of the French translation, the faithfulness of Cipriani's copies of the sculptures, and by the strength, clearness, delicacy, of that mixed manner of copper-plate engraving, (partly stipelled, partly lined,) which Bartolozzi<sup>b</sup> adopted to give better effect to the impressions of them.

If any deduction should be made from these praises, it is on account of the paper which was made use of both for the plates and the letter-press.

<sup>b</sup> Some information is to be gained as to the date of the Work from the Frontispiece, *Julius Cæsar offering up his caskets of Gems to Venus*. The engraver's mark, *F. Bartolozzi sculp. Lond. 1780*, is at the bottom of it. In the enumeration of Jacob Bryant's Works given by Nichols, (*Literary Anecdotes*, vol. iv. p. 670.) the *Gemmarum antiquarum Delectus*, &c. is dated 1783.

It is of French manufacture, chosen probably for its softness, but which has by lapse of years become discoloured, and in many copies grievously spotted and defaced.

Without intending to detract in any way from that love of the Arts and Sciences which characterized the noble projector of this splendid work, nor from his honourable disregard of expense in making it worthy both of the Gems to be delineated, and of him, who sought to record these wonders of his cabinet, still it must be admitted, that by adopting the exclusive principle which in those days too generally governed plans and purposes of this sort, (as in the instance of the Duke of Devonshire, who printed but would not publish his Book of 80 Gems<sup>a</sup>,) injury was done to the study of the Antique, to Archæological Literature, but especially to the Fine Arts, and to those improvements in modern taste and workmanship, which would have been promoted by the study of these sculptures of antiquity.

The writer saw a fine copy of the DELECTUS in the *Bibliothèque Royale* at Paris, and observed to the

<sup>a</sup> This Work was entitled, *Les pierres gravées de Milord Duc de Devonshire au nombre de quatre vingt dessinées par le Sieur Gosmond et gravées par Claude du Bosc à Londres* (sine anno). In like manner Sir R. Worsley, Bart. would not permit his splendid Work, "*the Museum Worsleyanum*," 2 vols. folio, to be published. It is true that some of the presentation-copies of these prohibited publications, by the deaths of their owners, or from other causes, have got into book sales; but the Fine Arts were not much benefitted by this, for they were bought up as rarities by book-collectors at enormous prices, to be locked up among their stores. A Copy of the *Marlborough Gems*, 2 vols. fol. was once sold for 120 guineas.



Librarian, that it was probably a presentation-copy, and should be prized both for its beauty and its rarity; adding, that the Nobleman who planned, conducted, and paid for these costly volumes forbade their publication. *Mais Monsieur*, (replied the Librarian,) *ce n'est pas là le moyen de faire avancer les beaux Arts*. It was painful to admit, but impossible to deny, the truth of the censure; nothing impedes the free progress of improvement more than this love of exclusive possession, this unwillingness to share with the public the pleasure of reading a valuable book or beholding a beautiful engraving; this studious removal of volumes, exhibiting and explaining fine models of ancient taste and skill, from the artist's sight and general inspection.

An account  
of the *Gem-*  
*marum*  
*Marlbury-*  
*ensium De-*  
*lectus*.

As the *Gemmarum Marlburgensium Delectus* is so little known even to the lovers of polite literature, it may serve to draw attention to these interesting relics of antiquity, and gratify the curiosity of all, if the contents of this erudite, and beautiful but rare and unpublished Work be set forth in a descriptive List or Index.

## VOLUME I.

*N.B. C. signifies Cameo, or carved en relief.—I. Intaglio, or carved en creux. The name of the stone itself, and its greatest dimension are annexed.*

The Frontispiece claims a few words. It is designed by Cipriani, *Gemma-rum Marl-buriensium Delectus*, Vol. 1. and represents Julius Cæsar offering up his caskets of Gems in the temple of Venus. The thought is taken from Pliny, lib. xxxviii. cap. 1. *Is enim* (sc. Julius Cæsar) *pretiosis his Lapidibus conquisitis, Dactylithecas in Veneris Genitricis templo consecravit.* It is remarkable that Pompey also was a great collector of Gems. Marcellus, in imitation of Julius Cæsar, presented his Gems to Apollo.

1. Head of Publius Scipio Africanus. Sicilian workmanship. C. Agate.  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch.
2. Head of Lucius Cornelius Sylla, the Dictator. I. Cornelian. 1 inch.
3. Head of Julius Cæsar laureated, with an Augur's staff of office and a star. I. Onyx.  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inch.
4. Head of M. Junius Brutus; the original from which many others have been taken. I. Cornelian,  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
5. Head of M. J. Brutus, with a caduceus and a tortoise, the first an emblem of his skill as a negociator, and the last of his prudence. I. Onyx.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
6. Head of Lepidus the Triumvir, with the Augur's staff of office. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
7. Head of Augustus, with a radiated crown, as Apollo. C. Sardonyx, nearly 3 inches.
8. Head of Augustus as High Priest, with a laurel crown, probably by Dioscorides. C. Agate.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
9. Head of Marcellus. Virgil's egregius formâ juvenis Æneid. vi. 861. C. Agate.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
10. Bust of Livia crowned with laurel. Bosom covered, the head of the young Tiberius looking up at his mother. C. Turquoise.  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inch. Maternal love finely expressed.
11. Head of the young Tiberius. C. Agate.  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch.
12. Bust of Germanicus togated, head laureated, front face. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inch.

13. Head of Agrippina, wife of Germanicus, as Diana with her quiver. Head laureated. Workmanship perfect. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
14. Head of Agrippina as Ceres, wheat-ears gracefully interwoven with the coiffure. I. Cornelian. 1 inch.
15. Laureated Head of Galba. C. Agate.  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inch.
16. Laureated Head of Galba, in more advanced life. C. Agate.  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch.
17. A togated Bust of Nerva. Head laureated. Front face—very fine sculpture. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inch.
18. Head of Nerva. I. Amethyst.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
19. Head of Marciana, Trajan's sister, elegant disposition of the hair. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
20. Head of Sabina, Hadrian's wife, beautiful coiffure. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch.
21. Head of Antinous, with inscription ANTI. A work worthy of some first-rate artist. I. Black Agate.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
22. Togated Bust of Caracalla, front face. C. Head, Oriental Alabaster, the rest Agate, cemented upon a Sardonyx.  $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches.
23. Laureated Head of Caracalla. C. Flesh-coloured Agate, cemented upon a black ground.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
24. Head of Julia Domna, wife of Severus. Remarkable for the head dress. I. Aqua Marina. 1 inch.
25. Head of Laocoon, exactly copied from the celebrated Group by Polydorus, Agesander, and Athenodorus. C. Amethyst.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
26. Semiramis, a half length; some suppose it to be the Muse of History, a roll of paper in hand, by a first-rate Artist. I. Cornelian. 1 inch.
27. Helmetted Head of the Macedonian Minerva, called Alcida. Very fine. C. Agate.  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
28. The Phocion's Head, the only Gem by a modern Artist, Alessandro Cesare, *il piu bello Cammeo*, says Vasari, *che si possa vedere*. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
29. The Heads of Jupiter and Juno, after the celebrated marble by Phidias, the admirable work of a Greek Artist of the Golden Age. C. Agate. 1 inch.
30. Head of Venus, most beautiful, equal in style to the finest statues. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inch.
31. Head of a Bacchante, calm and composed, draped in a Fawn's Skin. Ivy leaves round her head, worthy of a Praxiteles, if he ever worked on Gems. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.

32. Full length figure of Hercules, with Club in left, and Goblet in right hand. Engraver's name Admon. I. Cornelian. 1 inch.
33. A full length figure of Bacchus, young, graceful form, Thyrsus in the left, a Vase in the right hand. Greek workmanship of great beauty. I. Aqua Marina.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
34. A Faun sitting on a Tiger's skin, his head rests on the palm of his hand, the elbow on his knees, the double Phrygian flute between his legs. The work of Nicomachus, highly praised by Stosch. I. Black Agate.  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
35. A full length figure of an Athleta anointing himself for the conflict with oil out of an Ampulla on a table. No Statue can surpass this sculpture in design and workmanship. The Gem belonged to Pope Clement V. I. Sardonyx.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
36. Full length figure of Mercury, cloak falling from his shoulder, a Purse in his right, and the Caduceus in his left hand, a Cock at his feet, also an Altar with a Crab upon it; one of the Symbols of the Cabiri. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
37. Full length figure of Mars the Avenger, with Helmet, Spear, Buckler, and Cloke, to whom Augustus erected a Temple, after he had revenged the death of Julius Cæsar. This Sculpture was probably copied from the Statue in his Temple. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
38. Full length of a Soldier in the act of stepping down from a rock, with Lance and Buckler in his right hand, whilst he lays hold of a projection with his left. A fine anatomical Study. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
39. Diomede's dispute with Ulysses about his right to keep the Palladium, which he holds in his right hand and a dagger in his left to defend it; the body of the slain priestess lies at his feet. In the distance, a statue of Neptune and the walls of Troy. *Æneid* ii. 164. also Suidas sub voc. *Διομήδεως ἀνάγκη*. By Felix, who in this Gem has improved upon the manner in which other Engravers had treated this subject. I. Cornelian.  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inch.
40. A Marine God and Goddess swimming, accompanied by a Marine Cupid on a Dolphin, and another in the water. The Engraver's name Hyllus. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
41. Three more-than-half-length figures of a wounded Soldier supported by his two Comrades, and protected by their shields. It may be Epaminondas after the Battle of Mantinea. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.

42. Full length of a Soldier with a bow, himself wounded by an arrow, and sinking under his wound, whilst his Comrade is driving off the enemy. The whole story is admirably expressed. I. Iade-  
 $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
43. Full length of a Female elegantly draped, with a Girl walking before her as if in procession; the Girl holds a Thyrsus in her left, and a Pitcher in her right hand. C. Sardonyx.  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch.
44. Full length of a Faun with a Cloak of goat's skin, his foot is resting on a stool, that he may support a little Child on his knees, whom he is teaching to play on Pan's pipe. C. Agate. 1 inch.
45. Full length of Alexander the Great with Bucephalus, his buckler hangs from his arm; a breastplate on the ground, as a trophy. The work probably of Pyrgoteles, Alexander's engraver. I. Cornelian.  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inch.
46. Full lengths of Apollo saving Æneas after he had been struck by a stone by Diomedes. Nothing was ever conceived and executed in a finer style. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
47. Full length Female Figures in some procession upon the occasion of a victory. This is but a fragment; one female is blowing a trumpet: the horse without a rider, and a weeping Female are the spoils of the Conqueror. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch.
48. Full lengths of two Amazons, one supporting her dying Comrade. Never was so much scenic effect contained in a space so small. A wonderful composition. C. Sardonyx.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
49. Full lengths of Figures, two Men, one Woman, celebrating some festival in honour of Bacchus. A fragment. Feet broken off. Very fine group. C. Agate. 1 inch.
50. The celebrated Cupid and Psyche, *voici sans contredit le chef d'œuvre de la gravure*, so says the French description of this Gem, *partout s'y voyent reunies la beauté, la dignité, la grace*. C. Sardonyx. 2 inches.

## VOLUME II.

The Frontispiece of this Volume is also by Cipriani. It is founded *Gemma-  
rum Marl-  
buriensium*  
on Allegory, and not like the other on an Historical Fact. In this a Female (she may be called the Guardian Angel of Gems) is *Delectus,*  
persuasively remonstrating with Time, and trying to stay his Scythe Vol. 2.  
from its customary work of destruction, whilst two little Sylphs in the foreground are holding up the results of their searches among the ruins of a Temple. One of them holds up a Cameo and Intaglio, the other a little Statue of Minerva, the Marlborough Arms in the back ground on a pedestal.

1. Head of Ptolemy Auletes as Neptune, with a radiated Crown after his naval victory over Archelaus. His son formed the Alexandrian Library, and in the reign of that son, the Septuagint Version was written. I. Topaze.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
2. Head of Metrodorus with beard, a Philosopher. There were many Philosophers of this name. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
3. Heads of Socrates and Plato, face to face on the same Gem. I. Garnet.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
4. Head of Alexander the Great. The work of his Engraver Pyrgoteles. Upon the helmet there are figures engraved, but the subject of them is not known. C. Sardonyx. 2 inches.
5. Bust of Sappho, partly draped with  $\Sigma\Lambda\Phi$  on the field of the Gem, as also a Bee and a Lyre; hair gracefully braided. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
6. Half length figure of Phryne, slightly draped. I. Cornelian.  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches.
7. Bust of Pyrrhus, King of Epire; his helmet is shaped like a Dragon. C. Agate.  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches.
8. Unknown head of a Man; fine countenance, the work of Scyllax. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
9. Head of a Man unknown; fine expression. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
10. Winged Head of Medusa, with a few snakes; fine face. C. Agate.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
11. Medusa's Head, full face. Natter says of it, *l'ordonnance est belle, le gout noble, l'exécution admirable*. C. Oriental Agate.  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches.
12. Half length of Minerva helmetted; full face; by Eutyches, Pupil of Dioscorides. I. Amethyst.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.

13. Bust of youthful Bacchus; head encircled with grapes and vine leaves. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
14. Head of the Goddess Libera, encircled with vine leaves. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inch.
15. Head of a Bacchant, his hair intertwined with ivy leaves. Very fine workmanship. C. Sardonyx.  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch.
16. Head of Mercury, with Caduceus; a fragment, of Greek workmanship. I. Sardonyx. 2 inches.
17. Head of Isis; of dark complexion. Worked in the Egyptian manner. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
18. Heads of Hercules and Iole, on the same stone, but on opposite sides. Each figure is arrayed in a lion's skin. C. Onyx.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
19. Head of L. Junius Brutus. I. Agate.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
20. Head of Hannibal, helmeted, with a horse on his shield. I. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
21. Bust of Lucius Cornelius Sylla, in a breastplate, with dagger attached; fit accompaniment to such a portrait. His son in law Scaurus was the first who made a collection of Gens at Rome; he had a very fine one. C. Agate.  $1\frac{7}{8}$  inch.
22. Head of C. Cilnius Mecænas; as fine as any thing carved by statuary. C. Sardonyx. 1 inch.
23. Head of M. Agrippa, encircled with a rostrated crown, given him for his naval victory over Pompey, near Sicily. C. Agate.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
24. Half length of Livia Drusilla, full face, the attached wife of Augustus, and deified after death. Most gracefully draped and coiffed, and of a lovely countenance. C. Sardonyx. 2 inches.
25. Head of Drusus, son of Tiberius. Exquisite in workmanship and expression. C. Sardonyx.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
26. Head of Drusus, son of Germanicus. A fine sculpture. C. Agate.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
27. Bust of Antonia or Agrippina, from the *burin* of some Greek Artist; the head laureated, shoulders draped. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
28. Bust of Domitia or Julia, daughter of Titus. It represents her apotheosis, borne to the skies on the wings of a Peacock. Males of the Augustan family were apotheosed on the wings of an eagle. A fragment gracefully coiffed and draped. C. Sardonyx.  $3\frac{3}{8}$  inches.
29. Head of Adrian, who is said to have intended to build a temple to our Saviour. C. Agate. 2 inches.

30. Head of Antinous, with his name on the ground of the stone. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
31. Bust of young Antoninus; of exquisite workmanship. Cælius is the Engraver's name; it is on the stone. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
32. Bust of Lucilla, daughter of Marcus Aurelius; beautifully draped and coiffed. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inch.
33. Busts of Didius Julianus, called Commodus Emperor, and his Wife, Manlia Scantilla; they are face to face: both wear Laurel Wreaths. The largest Gem of the whole Collection. C. A wonderful Sardonyx.  $8\frac{3}{8}$  inches.
34. Head of the Dog Sirius; ears of Corn project from his head; it bears the Engraver's name Gæus on its Collar. I. Garnet. 1 inch.
35. Four Cows; their attitudes most natural, equal to the celebrated heifer of the Engraver Myron. *Myronem bucula nobilitavit.* Plin. lib. xxxiv. c. 8. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{5}{8}$  inch.
36. Two Horses; one of them drinking out of a Pail. The most celebrated Engraver of Horses among the Ancients was Calamis, according to Pliny, *Calamis quadrigas bigasque fecit, equis semper sine æmulo expressis.* Plin. lib. xxxiv. c. 8. This is a perfect representation of nature, and the anatomy full of truth. C. Agate.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
37. A Bull pulled to the ground by a Lion. Here too the Engraver shews his knowledge of the muscular action of Animals. The sculpture is full of power and spirit. C. Sardonyx.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
38. A Temple of Mercury; the interior in good perspective as to sides, ceiling, and floor; four Columns on each side; Statue of Mercury at the end. I. Sardonyx.  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.
39. A General on Horseback smiting his fallen foe. Composition and workmanship most striking; the Stone is Obsidian, the only one of the sort in this Collection, it is black; it was used for sepulchral subjects. I. Obsidian.  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inch.
40. Coronis and Apollo; the Nymph was faithless to Apollo's Love; a Crow informed the angry Lover, who slew his Rival. The Crow did not escape his wrath, for he changed its colour from white to black. See Ovid's Met. lib. ii. 590. The Crow is introduced into this sculpture. I. Cornelian.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
41. Two Cupids erecting a trophy upon gaining a Victory in imitation of military practice. Nothing can be more elegantly designed and executed than this device. C. Agate.  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch.



42. Ganymede borne aloft by Jupiter's Eagle; a subject which tried the skill of many Gem Engravers. Cæmus has admirably succeeded in this instance. I. Sardonyx.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
43. Ganymede giving Jove's Eagle water to drink out of a cup. Well designed and engraved. C. Onyx.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
44. Hercules strangling a Lion; two others in a den below. The subject, as in so many other instances, borrowed from the works of the statuary. C. Sardonyx. 2 inches.
45. A full length figure of a Faun with pointed ears: though the grapes round his head, and in his hands, seem to denote a Bacchanalian. I. Sardonyx.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
- 46 Full length figure of Omphale, carrying the Club of Hercules, and covered with his lion's skin. The workmanship is certainly that of a Greek Artist. I. Amethyst.  $\frac{7}{8}$  inch.
47. A Triumphal Group; car, two horses, the Conqueror with the Goddess of Victory. C. Sardonyx.  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch.
48. A Female beautifully coiffed and draped, driving a Biga, the two-horse car, the Horses rearing and prancing. From the talent and skill of an eminent Artist. C. Sardonyx. 2 inches.
49. This too is a Female driving a Biga, and in most particulars like the last: but a little mutilated. C. Sardonyx. 2 inches.
50. A Female suckling a young Tiger, another sitting near her. A cruel man is said to have had a Tigress for his Mother, but this Allegory is quite new: the presence of Silenus and the Tiger, and the Vessels on the ground, imply that the subject is Bacchanalian. As a work of Art, nothing can surpass it; it must be ranked next the Cupid and Psyche in *ordonnance* and execution. C. Sardonyx.  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch.

General  
representa-  
tions of the  
contents of  
the De-  
LECTUS.

From these statements and enumerations it appears, that there are twenty-five\* Cameos in vol. 1. and

\* Marriette's interesting Volume (Vol. 2.) gives no Cameos—they are all Intaglios, in number 125—Gems carved *en creux* have been called *Gemma signatoriæ*, as having been set in *annulis signatoriis*, signet-rings, for sealing letters or authoritative instruments. Cameos were sometimes, but rarely, used as rings—if large, never—they were generally decorative parts of female attire, and fastened to bracelets, clasps, brooches, girdles, armlets, coiffures, &c. without

twenty-eight in vol. 2. total, fifty-three: and that of Intaglios there are twenty-five in vol. 1. and twenty-two in vol. 2. total, forty-seven; making together the total of one hundred.

That in respect of the Stones employed, twenty-three of the Sculptures are worked on Agate, four on Cornelian, four on Onyx, thirty-six on Sardonyx, two on Garnet, one on Topaze, four on Amethyst, one on Obsidian, one on Turquoise, and one on Iade.

That in this Collection there are twelve lettered with the <sup>b</sup>names of their Engravers. In vol. 1. No. 9. was engraved by Aspasius. No. 32. by Admon. No. 34. by Nicomachus. No. 35. by Gnæus. No. 39. by Felix. No. 40. by Hyllus. No. 50. by Tryphon. In vol. 2. No. 8. was cut by Scyllax. No. 12. by Eutyches, pupil of Dioscorides. No. 31. by Ælius. No. 34. by Gæus. No. 42. by Cæmus.

doubt, if the subjects appertained to the mysteries and mythology of heathenism, they were sometimes applied to the garments of those who officiated. Cameos set in rings were not for use, but ornament. It is to be observed, that Cameos are often copies of Intaglios—and that subjects engraved *en creux* on chrystal, or other transparent stone, look like subjects *en camayeu*, that is, in relief, if seen through the stone from its opposite side.

<sup>b</sup> Among Stosch and Picart's engraved copies of 70 Gems bearing the names of those who carved them are found five now in the Blenheim Collection, Nos. 32. 34. 39. 50 of vol. 1. and No. 12 of vol. 2. See *Gemmæ antiquæ cælatæ sculptorum nominibus insignitæ*. Amsterdam, 1720. fol.

Those will best understand the value of Gems lettered with the names of the Artists, who are aware that Sculptors, or rather Scalptors, only put their names to their best performances. The names of 48 have been so transmitted to us.

Subjects  
engraved.

Fourthly, as to the persons, things, compositions, engraved upon these Gem-stones, if arranged according to the classification generally adopted, they will present the following diversities of subject-matter.

Upon subjects mythological and fabulous,	33
Relating to Grecian history, including the Trojan war,	8
Relating to Roman history, { Republican,	14
Imperial,	26
Philosophers and Poets,	3
Relating to subjects military,	4
Processions, and Games,	7
Animals,	3
Relating to Egyptian history and mythology,	2
<hr/>	
Total	100

Special sub-  
jects of the  
engraved  
Gems.

But such representations as these, although furnishing information to the curious, and throwing light upon things hitherto buried within the recesses of Libraries altogether inaccessible, or approached with difficulty or inconvenience, are somewhat foreign from the immediate object of this paper, which is to draw public attention to these sculptures as proofs of consummate taste, specimens of perfect workmanship, and models for imitation not only to the engraver of stones, but to all engaged in the mimetic arts, however various the material on which taste and skill may have exercised their powers, however high or humble the department to which the artist may have applied his diligence or ambition. It is said of Polycletus, that

he had made a statue so perfect in its proportions and anatomical correctness, that it was called the *Kanon*<sup>d</sup>—the Rule of Excellence—of which Pliny observes, “that artists sought to deduce from it as from the authority of a law, the right modes or methods of delineation ; and that of Polycletus alone of all men, it might be said, that by this one work of art, he had settled the very principles of art, and by one surpassing model had formed a complete system of instruction ;” for such is the amplitude of Pliny’s observation, if thrown into paraphrase. It would do no violence to truth, to transfer this eulogy from the Statuary to the Gem-engraver, from Polycletus to Tryphon, for of his Cupid and \*Psyche it has been

These Gems  
present mo-  
dels for  
study and  
imitation.

<sup>d</sup> Fecit et quem *Canona* artifices vocant, lineamenta artis ex eo petentes, velut e lege quadam solusque, hominum artem ipse fecisse, artis opere judicatur. Lib. xxxiv. c. 8.

\* The existence of this astonishing performance, mental and manual, was first made known to the world by James Spon in his *Miscellanea eruditæ antiquitatis*, Lugdun. 1679, p. 7. where there is a coarse engraving of it ; it originally belonged to Pietro Ligorio, a pupil of Julio Romano, and precessor of M. Angelo as architect of St. Peter’s, who died 1580. This brings the history of this inestimable Gem down to the great discoveries of the Medicean age, and the first studies of the antique. To the same age we are to refer the finding of the celebrated Intaglio known by the name of M. Angelo’s Seal,—and it is a singular coincidence, that the finest Cameo and the finest Intaglio of antiquity should have been discovered about the same time—that the Intaglio should have fallen into the hands of M. Angelo, and the Cameo into the hands of Pietro Ligorio his predecessor as architect of St. Peter’s, and that each should have escaped the dangers of loss and destruction and find at last safe places of deposit, the Cameo in Blenheim Palace, and the Intaglio in the *Cabinet du Roi* at Paris.

truly said, “ *Voici sans contredit le chef d'œuvre de la gravure, ouvrage si exquis, si beau, et si absolument parfait, dans toutes ses parties, qu'on ne peut rien voir, qu'on ne peut rien même imaginer, qui soit au dessus. Partout s'y voyent reunies la beauté, la dignité, et la grâce.*” (DELECTUS, Vol. I. No. 50.)

But the praise is not only applicable to the Work of Tryphon, but to the Minerva of Eutyches, the Hercules of Admon, the Faun of Nicomachus, and especially to the Diomedes and Ulysses of Calphurnius Felix, all in the Blenheim Collection, and engraved in the DELECTUS. Neither would it be just or true to restrict the application of these praises to the Gems, *sculptorum nominibus insignitæ*, when there are so many in these volumes which though without the names of the artists may be said to rival some of the most beautiful of the *named* Gems. Of this description there may be specially cited and proposed

I have not been able to trace the descent of Tryphon's Gem from Ligorio to the Earl of Arundel, who to avoid the troubles of political life left England for Italy about 1636, and there became the greatest collector of antiques of that age; from that time the Gem is always referred to, as being in the Arundelian Collection. Spon (Jacobus Sponius) the friend and companion of the celebrated traveller, Sir George Wheler, was in England about 1670, and there saw and copied this sculpture, it being then in the hands of the Arundel family.

This long note must be farther lengthened by the assertion made by Picart respecting the veiled faces of Cupid and Psyche: *On y voit le visage de Cupidon et de Psyché au travers du voile qui leur couvre la tête et qui est si délié qu'il n'en cache presque aucun trait ce qui est très difficile et très hardi sur tout dans un ouvrage de gravure en pierre—c'est aussi ce qu'aucun graveur ni sculpteur n'a jamais osé entreprendre d'imiter.* Picart afterwards makes two qualified exceptions.

to the studies of those who are seeking proficiency in Academies of the fine arts, the following fine models or *Kavónes*, for the guidance of the Painter and Statuary, as well as the Gem-engraver.

I do not intend to dwell upon the Heads or Busts <sup>Heads and Busts of the Collection.</sup> of the Collection, although there are many of the finest expression and most exquisite carving; in respect of which it may be asked, “Do you not see the vigour that fortitude gives to the eye of man? what a keen and penetrating look proceeds from prudence? how by reverence of heart the eye is subdued to repose and modesty? how joy is seen to beam through its serenity? how severity of purpose produces a corresponding sternness of vision? and how that sternness is relaxed by mirth?” But there are some of these Heads that require notice; for instance, that of Phocion, which has such high <sup>The Phocion.</sup> testimony to its perfection, that it would be to disregard the judgment of M. Angelo, if it were to be passed over in silence. It is the work of Alessandro Cesare, one of Lorenzo de’ Medici’s Glyptographic School, and the only modern Gem in the DELECTUS. When the painter beheld it, he exclaimed, “The art of Gem-engraving has reached the hour of its death, for it is impossible to surpass this work!” *Disse che era venuto l’hora della morte nell’ arte, perciocché non si poteva veder’ meglio!* adopting the notion, *non progredi est regredi*, and that after an

‘An non vides quantum oculis det vigorem fortitudo? quantam intentionem prudentia? quantam modestiam et quietem reverentia? quantam serenitatem lætitia? quantum rigorem severitas? quantam remissionem hilaritas? Senec. Ep. cvi.

art had reached the ἀκμή of its perfection, it must begin to fall off and fail in all its future productions. Vasari, who records Buonarroti's saying, adds, "*La testa di Fotione Ateniese è miracolosa et il piu bello Cameo che si possa vedere.*" (See No. 28. Vol. 1. DELECTUS.)

Opinion of  
Laurence  
Natter on  
some of  
these Gems.

But though it be not possible to go into a selection of the Heads for special admiration, the object of my paper would be defeated, if I were not to refer to those which the celebrated Gem-engraver and Medallist of Biberach in Suabia, Laurence Natter, the publisher of the Bessborough Gems, (now forming part of the Marlborough Collection,) has distinguished by his praise. The following in Vol. 1. of the DELECTUS have had the advantage of his recommendation.

- No. 4. *Brutus*. C'est l'unique portrait ressemblant que nous ayons de ce grand homme.
- 8. *Augustus*. Ouvrage si achevé que l'on oseroit presque assurer qu'il est de Dioscoride et digne d'un tel maitre.
- 10. *Livia et Tiberius*. Le travail fait-honneur au siècle d'Auguste qui est célèbre pour la perfection de cet art.
- 12. *Germanicus*. La draperie degagée le visage et le col parfait.
- 25. *Laocoon*. Ceci est un chef d'œuvre de l'art . . . tout exprime le douleur au dernier degré de perfection.
- 35. *Athlete*. Cette célèbre gravure est d'une beauté achevée.
- 46. *Apollo saving Ulysses*. C'est la perfection de l'art.

In Vol. 2. he has also recorded his judgment upon the following :

- 3. *Socrates and Plato*. Ces deux portraits sont les meilleurs et les plus ressemblans que l'on ait de ces Philosophers.
- 4. *Alexander*. De la main de Pyrgoteles, son Graveur.
- 11. *The Medusa*. Le gout en est noble et l'exécution admirable.

17. *Isis*. Cette gravure est bonne dans la manière Egyptienne.  
 28. *Apotheosis of Domitia*. Une preuve de la grande entreprise de l'Artiste.  
 32. *Lucilla*. Le travail est excellent.  
 34. *Sirius*. Le muscles sont adoucis si parfaitement, qu'il n'y est pas possible d'y appercevoir la moindre trace des outils.

With respect to the *sujets de composition*, they are Subjects of compositions on the Gems. either whole-length figures characterized by such accompaniments as belong to the persons engraved, or groups of figures forming as it may be said *the Dramatis Personæ* of some historical, mythological, or allegorical scene or subject of the Gem; of the latter description there are 32 in these Volumes, of the former 9, to which should be added half lengths of Sappho, Phryne, and seven others; there are also five groups of animals, and an interior of the Temple of Mercury in perfect perspective\*, with his statue at the end of the Vista.

Of the subjects of these heads, busts, half and full lengths, and groups, in short of all the Ancient practice as to the commemoration of things, events, and persons. biographical and historical subjects of the DE-LECTUS, it may be observed, that no splendid achievement ever took place in Greece or Rome, no great public character ever deserved well of his country, no distinguished individual ever added to the triumphs of talent, literature, or science, whatever may have been the field of his exertions, in war or peace, poetry or philosophy, eloquence, legislation, or magistracy, or even in the stadium or circus, as an athlete or charioteer who was not handed

\* It is said that the ancients knew nothing of the principles of perspective, and failed in works that required such knowledge;—this Gem refutes the observation.



down to posterity by statue or bust of brass or marble, by the arch or the column, and very often by more than one of these modes of commemoration. With this clue the antiquary may find his way through those difficulties in which he finds himself involved at the sight of sculptures which no quickness of apprehension can unravel without an acquaintance with facts and events, habits of life and national customs, set forth on the pages of Grecian and Roman antiquity ;—the same may be said of the fabulous and mythological sculptures. Research and erudition are the only sure means of knowledge, and never have they been more luminously or successfully employed than in the descriptions and elucidations of these Gems.

But to revert to the subjects of the Gem-sculptures, it will be found necessary for the discovery of their meaning, for the due appreciation of their value, and even for the right understanding of their perfections, either as works of art or the vehicles of posthumous fame, to bear in mind this ancient practice of handing down to posterity the likenesses of distinguished individuals, male and female, and the things or subject-matters for which they were celebrated, in marbles and bronzes of life-size, or above it ; and it is to be farther remembered, that it was the prevailing taste and temper of those times, for Gem-engravers to copy, and for the rich and great to purchase, copies of these large and magnificent memorials, when reduced to minuteness, and brought within the compass of a Cameo or an Intaglio of a very small size.

The ancients, like the moderns, were in the habit of copying works which had deserved and obtained an established reputation; and this is the reason why we find copies of the Venus of Medicis, the Apollo of the Belvidere, the Farnesian Hercules, the Antinous, and so many others of the celebrated Statues, engraved on Gems. Neither must we forget that all Gem-engravers were not alike endowed with genius; they were not all equally able to conceive and design subjects for themselves. There can be no doubt, that the men of talent in this line could invent, as well as execute, could compose, as well as carve, their subjects; but it must not be supposed that every worker of Gemstones was a Pyrgoteles, a Dioscorides, or a Tryphon; perhaps the greatest number were copyists, and these had recourse to heads, busts, statues, and relievos of superior excellence and celebrity, whereon to exercise their manual skill and laborious industry. In many instances these original works of ancient art have perished, with the marble, the bronze, the fresco and the tablet, which once fixed the admiring gaze of the beholder. But of these lost and destroyed wonders many had been previously copied in Gem-work, and so committed, as it may be said, to the safe custody of some imperishable Agate; and it cannot but be a source of satisfaction to think, that many a fine form and countenance, many a beautiful group of figures, many a record of intellectual power, and personal courage, and patriotic self-devotion, once set forth and existing in large public monuments, the ornaments of Rome or Athens, and the

Farther observations upon the practice of the ancient Gem-engravers in taking reduced copies of the large Works of the great Masters.

The original works are very often lost, and the subjects of them are now where to be found but in Gems.

admiration of the world, have been transmitted to us, not indeed in the magnitude of the original works, but not less expressively, nor less honourably, in the Cameo or Intaglio of some able copyist.

These  
views are  
confirmed  
by the ob-  
servations  
of Jacob  
Bryant,  
Esq. in de-  
scribing  
Gem No.  
35. Vol 1.

These views are in strict accordance with the observations introduced by that elegant scholar and profound archæologist, Jacob Bryant, Esq. into his Description of the 35th Gem of the 1st Vol. of the DELECTUS, the subject of which is the Athlete preparing himself<sup>a</sup> for the conflict by the application of the *strigil* (*se distringendo*); he informs us that it is clear and certain by the evidence of existing Gems, that whatever was to be found admirable and worthy of imitation in the larger works of the sculptor or statuary, is to be found also in the fine works of the Gem-engravers, referring us at the same time to the 34th Book of Pliny for the information, that Polycletus had cast in bronze a statue in the same attitude; it is clear that Gnæus, the engraver of this Sardonyx, had borrowed his subject and his mode of treating it from Polycletus to perpetuate the fame of some victorious athlete.

And herein we have a proof of what has been just observed, that in many instances Gems make up for the losses of original works. The figure on this Sardonyx, most true and beautiful in anatomy, attitude, and aspect, the perfection of imitative art, and successively the treasured property of Pope Clement V., the Baron Stosch, the Earl of Bess-

<sup>a</sup> Lysippus also cast a statue of an Athlete, in the same attitude, *se distringentem*, which Marcus Agrippa placed in front of his warm baths. Pliny, lib. xxxiv. c. 8.

borough, and the Duke of Marlborough, no where exists among any of the marbles, or bronzes, or frescos of antiquity, and would have been lost, but for this engraving of it, to the schools of design and the lovers of the Fine Arts.

Pliny, whose authority has been just cited to shew that Polycletus had preceded Gnæus in the composition of this subject, may be farther appealed to for proof, that the subjects of other Cameos and Intaglios were borrowed from works executed in life-size, or above it, by artists in bronze, marble, or painting. This author is known to have dedicated four of his Books, the 34th, 35th, 36th, and 37th, to the Fine Arts; to the art of casting of bronzes, to painting, to the carving of statues, to the engraving of Gems; with respect to the last, (to the great loss of all lovers and practisers of this branch of taste and knowledge,) the author is so much occupied upon the natural history and medicinal qualities of precious and other stones, that his instruction on these matters, unlike that in his preceding Books, is very scanty. It is true that the first chapters of the 37th Book open with notices of the Gems of Polycrates and Pyrrhus, and the engravers of Alexander and Augustus, and the rings of Augustus and Mecænas, and the Dactyliothecæ and Gem-collectors of former times; but however promising the opening of the Book, there is not to be found any corresponding fulfilment of our expectations. Much information however is to be deduced from the three preceding Books, on casting, carving, and painting, for the illustration of the Gem-engravings of the *DELECTUS*, and for the

In farther confirmation of this practice of copying, Pliny may be referred to, and comparisons may be made between the subjects of the Gems of the *Delectus* and what he describes as subjects of a large size executed by the great Master-workers in bronze, marble, and painting.

Instances of  
celebrated  
works in  
bronze and  
marble  
having sup-  
plied Gem-  
engravers  
with sub-  
jects or  
sugges-  
tions.

confirmation of what has been said concerning the custom of copying in Gem-work, on a minute scale, the large and splendid performances of a Lysippus, a Phidias, or an Apelles. The first instance of this practice of copying is supplied by No. 25. Vol. 1. and a noble proof it is, being the head of Laocoon with the same features, and disposition of hair, and look of convulsive grief, discovered in the work of Agesander, Polydorus, and Athenodorus, which Pliny pronounces to be superior to any thing ever accomplished in painting or sculpture, (Plin. xxxvi. c. 5.) The head of Venus (No. 30. Vol. 1.) is so gracefully carved, that it may be referred to that statue by Praxiteles, which is said to have ennobled Gnidus<sup>1</sup>. The bust of Pyrrhus, King of Epire, (No. 7. Vol. 2.) by reference to Pliny, lib. xxxiv. c. 8. will be found to have been one of the admired works of Hegias, from which the engraver probably borrowed his likeness. In like manner the expression of the Soldier fast sinking under his wound in No. 46. Vol. 1. agrees with what Pliny has observed of a bronze of Ctesilaus, Plin. lib. xxxiv.<sup>2</sup> Cæmus the lithographer engraved on the Sardonyx, No. 42. Vol. 2. a Ganymede borne upwards by Jove's eagle, and in a manner so expressive of carefulness, lest his charge should be hurt by the grasp of his talons, as to coincide exactly with Pliny's description of the bronze of Leochares on the same subject, and

<sup>1</sup> Illo enim signo Praxiteles nobilitavit Gnidium. Plin. lib. xxxvi. c. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Ctesilas vulneratum fecit deficientem in quo possit intelligi quantum restat animæ.

treated in the same way, Plin. lib. xxxiv. c. 8.<sup>1</sup> Hyllus's Cornelian Intaglio, No. 40. Vol. 1. representing a Triton and Nereid borne in the bosom of a wave, may well be taken for a copy of some marble group of Ceplissodorus, for his talents were employed on the same subjects, Plin. xxxvi. c. 5.<sup>2</sup> That wonderful Gem of the wounded and dying Amazon, No. 48. Vol. 1. may be said to have had its prototype in a bronze work of Ctesilaus, Plin. xxxiv. c. 8.<sup>3</sup> Mariette, speaking of two other Gems on the same subject, says, *Ne semblent-elles pas des imitations de ce morceau de sculpture, qui, au rapport de Plutarque, avoit été trouvé sur les bords du Thermodon ?* With respect to the Gems, Nos. 48. 49. Vol. 2. (subjects, two-horse chariots,) Pliny tells us, Lib. xxxiv. 8. that Aristides, pupil of Polycletus, cast in bronze, chariots drawn by two and four horses, *quadrigas bigasque*; in the same chapter he says that Euphranor did the same, and that Lysippus made four-horse chariots of all sorts, *quadrigas omnium generum*; and in his 35th Book he informs us, that the brush of Apelles was employed in the same line, *pinxit et Apelles currentes quadrigas*. Lib. xxxv. 10. From some of these sources the Glyptographer may have copied these designs.

These instances supplied by the DELECTUS serve to

<sup>1</sup> Leochares aquilam fecit sentientem quid rapit in Ganymede et parcentem unguibus etiam per vestem.

<sup>2</sup> Cephissodori opera. Item Tritones, chorusque Phorci et pristes et multa alia marina.

<sup>3</sup> Ctesilaus Amazonem vulneratam fecit.

illustrate the practice of the Gem-engravers in the choice of subjects, as also in copying the chef d'œuvres of the great Artists in metal, marble, and painting. Those instances might be largely increased, if, instead of confining the selection to the Gems printed in the *DELECTUS*, a larger survey had been taken, and those of the Florentine Musæum, the *Cabinet du Roi*, the Orleans Gallery, had been resorted to, to shew the frequent occurrence (in these large Collections) of Cameos and Intaglios, whose heads, or figures, or *sujets de composition*, have been borrowed from works of celebrity, which, though spoken of by writers of antiquity, no longer exist in their original forms and materials, but which, without injury, have descended upon the surface or the substance of the Agate, in all their interesting and instructive excellencies, for the study of the artist, and the delight of the amateur\*.

These instances illustrate the practice of Gem-engravers; others might be supplied by other Cabinets of Cameos and Intaglios. The originals in many instances are lost, none but the copies on Gems remain.

From these general observations upon what may be called the origination of the subject-matters of the carved works on Gems, this paper must be now directed to its immediate object and purpose, that of advocating A REPRINT OF THE *DELECTUS*, and of making the reprinted volumes accessible by purchase to those who understand the importance of the services which have been done to archæological and classical

\* Those who may wish to pursue these comparisons any farther are referred to what Pliny calls the *Nobilitates Operum*,

In *Ære*, lib. xxxiv. c. 1.

In *Pictura*, lib. xxxv. c. 8.

In *Marmore*, lib. xxxvi. c. 5.

In *Gemmis*, lib. xxxvii. c. 1.

literature, and to the correction of taste and the improvement of the fine arts, by the publication of engraved copies of Gems. From the year 1544, Gems began to be copied and copper-plate engravings printed and published 1544. when Enea Vico wrote the first book on Gems, to 1783, the date of the *DELECTUS*, (239 years,) above 50 Works have successively drawn the public attention to the Cabinets of royal, noble, or private collectors, or to some of their contents ; of these publications some, (like that of George Ogle, Esq. 4to. 1741,) were confined to the explanation of fable and history, customs and habits, exercises and ceremonies, of the ancients, by means of subjects engraved on Gems ; others, on the contrary, were exclusively dedicated to the use of artists and the gratification of those who loved and studied the principles of antique design and workmanship, as in the instance of that *Dactyliotheca* or Collection of 2000 Gems from the best Cabinets of Europe, engraved and published expressly for the use of artists, 1778. Usefulness of engraved copies or pictures of antique works for the instruction of artists. The importance of such publications for such purposes is attested by one, who, alive to the benefits conferred on painters and painting by the early copper-plate engravers, has borne witness generally to the use of engravings for the instruction of artists in the peculiar excellencies of the antique. Sir Joshua Reynolds having observed, (*Discourse VI.*) Sir Joshua Reynolds' opinion. "that no man need be ashamed of copying the ancients, and that their works are to be considered a magazine of common property," goes on to say, "that the collection of the thoughts of the ancients which Raffaele made with so much trouble is a proof of his opinion on this subject ;" and concludes



by the following testimony to the usefulness of communicating to the public printed Collections of ancient works of art. "Such Collections," he says, "may be made with much more ease by means of an art scarcely known in Raffaele's time,—I mean that of ENGRAVING, by which at an easy rate every man may now avail himself of the inventions of antiquity."

The special object of the writer has been to point out the usefulness of publishing the engravings and descriptions of the Blenheim Collection.

In concurrence with these views, it has been the great end and aim of whatever may have been the researches, reasonings, or representations of this paper, to press it upon that love of classical literature, of the arts and sciences, and of painting in particular, which characterizes the present Noble Possessor of the finest Collection of antique Cameos and Intaglios, not only in England, but (with the exception of two, perhaps three, Cabinets) in the world, to permit the REPRINT AND PUBLICATION of the DELECTUS, not for honorary presents, not for the exclusive possession of a favoured few, as in 1783, but with the larger and more liberal design of making it useful, at a time when the works of ancient art are so much studied and consulted for the correction of what is wrong, the supply of what is defective, and the curtailment of what is superfluous in modern compositions.

Observations on the copper-plate engravings of the Marlborough Cameos and Intaglios.

The engravings of the DELECTUS are worthy the beautiful and precious nature of the Gems they exhibit; the most distinguished artists of the day were employed upon them; Cipriani copied, and Bartolozzi engraved, them; neither were the copies so largely magnified as to disturb similitude, nor in so small a degree, as to make the picture too minute for distinct perception. The copies do not ex-

ceed the right size, like the drawings in the Work of Stosch and Picart, fol. 1724, neither do they fall short of it, as in the Dactylionthea Goriæi, 4to. 1695. Avoiding each extreme, the engravings of the DELECTUS are in their dimensions like those chosen by St. Aubin, Zanetti, and Marriette, in the Cabinet du Duc d'Orleans, 2 Vols. fol. Paris, 1780, in the Gemme antiche, fol. Rome, 1750, and in the Recueil des Pierres gravées du Cabinet du Roi, fol. Paris, 1750; neither are they *gravures au simple trait*, mere outlines, as in Count Caylus's Cabinet du Roi, but executed in what is called the mixed manner, both by lines or hatchings, and by dots or stippled, the latter method being adopted where soft shading is required, the former for bringing out parts with strength and distinctness.

The writer in all these particulars relating to what he deems a most interesting and valuable work has been more occupied upon matters of detail than would have been necessary had these Volumes been known to the Schools of Art; or if the subject itself had of late days been made matter of treatise or discourse; or if the close connection between the larger and minuter works of ancient taste had been sufficiently understood; or if the study of Gem-sculpture, in its subserviency to the improvement of the art and science of design, had been placed, as it ought to have been, (under the authority of the great masters of painting and sculpture,) upon a higher grade in the scale, or course of instruction in Schools of Art. It was the want of such information in some modern Treatise which has led the writer,

Reason  
why these  
pages have  
run so much  
into detail.

(an ardent lover of the fine arts,) to enter so largely upon the subject of Gems in the First Part of his THOUGHTS, and with the like particularity into the consideration of the DELECTUS in the Second Part.

The publication of the DELECTUS strongly recommended upon the ground of usefulness.

It remains that he should earnestly recommend the unreserved PUBLICATION of a Work, at once learned and beautiful in itself, and useful for the study of the antique and the improvement of taste in its application to any works of art, and in any of its branches. For in the plates of the DELECTUS there will be found thoughts, (*concetti*, as the Italians call them, conceptions, not conceits,) fine imagery, severely-simple design, (but without any thing meagre or homely,) natural beauty, learned anatomy, noble expression, perfect composition of parts, and that *belle ordonnance* so much insisted upon by writers, things which cannot fail to assist the designs of genius, and help the artist in his studies, and even the artisan and manufacturer in his laborious skilfulness.

In these days of elegance the most refined in all sorts of manufactured decorations, antique workmanship has become matter of consideration and concern to persons engaged in commercial enterprise, especially to those occupied upon the minuter efforts of taste and talent, the die sinker, the seal engraver, the enameller, the chaser, the embosser, and especially the cameo-workers on shell or other substance. To them this publication will minister much in the way of suggestion; but not to these alone, but to all engaged in any of the provinces of decorative skill, or in any of the higher and nobler applications

of genius. There will be found in this, (as in other published *Recueils* and *Cabinets* of sculptured stones,) the same sort of instruction and guidance, as in the engraved copies of other sorts of antique workmanship in marble, bronze, or fresco. It may be even said, that in some respects, and for certain purposes, the Gem, whether worked *en creux* or *en relief*, if copied and printed like those in the *DELECTUS*, conveys more exact and particular instruction than that afforded by marbles, bronzes, or frescos of life, or above life, size. For the ancient Gem-engraver, by the magic of his tools, raised the form, aspect, and attitude of his figures, male and female, of old, youthful, and infant age, to that *beau ideal* which took them out of the crowd of common life, and the look and manners of earth's inhabitants, and without departing from the principles of truth and nature they exalted the nobleness of the noble form of man. The observation of Pliny on the art of casting statues is more true of the Glyptic Art, *Mirum est in hac arte quod nobiles viros nobiliores facit.* Plin. lib. xxxiv. c. 8.

But without digressing into any questions about the comparative merits of sculpture in its larger or smaller provinces, and without attempting to adjust the relative value of the instruction derivable from the study of Gem-works and Statue-works, it may be enough to say, that they are both founded upon the same principles, that they are both occupied upon the imitation of things natural, and the commemoration of things or persons real, and the poetical expression of things imaginary, that

they have so much in common, whether considered in theory or practice, that there is such an analogy between a work executed out of a block of marble, and a nodule of Agate, that as compositions they may be said to be subject to the same rules of design, and will be found to be equally profitable as lessons for the improvement of the art of designing. *Du coté de l'élégance et de la perfection du travail, les pierres qui ont été gravées par les grands artistes ne cedent rien aux Statues ; voici des modeles qui malgré le petit espace dans lequel ils sont contenus, les artistes ne sauroient trop étudier et imiter*<sup>p</sup>. And it is

Composi-  
tions on  
Gems, as  
on marbles,  
should be  
studied and  
imitated by  
artists, and  
should be  
made ac-  
cessible to  
them.

Marriette's observation<sup>q</sup>, *Soit dans le petit soit dans le grand c'est toujours chez ces grand artistes la même façon de dessiner et composer*.

These means of improvement ought not to be inaccessible, when the pathway to the useful knowledge and practical application of them is obvious and easy ; let them be released from the confinement, or rather concealment, which has hitherto placed the DELECTUS, with all its beautiful engravings and learned dissertations, out of the reach and sight both of the scholar and the artist.

But this call for its publication especially proceeds from the belief that the Work contains proofs that the lithographers of those days were rivals of the great painters and statuaries whose names are recorded in the praises and pictorial criticisms of Pliny, and whose works, methods, and principles of art, if compared with those of the Gem-engravers of the

<sup>p</sup> See Description of No. 30. Vol. 1. DELECTUS.

<sup>q</sup> *Traité des Pierres gravées*, Tomi i. p. 36.

Marlborough Collection, will shew that there was much in common between them both in the choice of subjects and their *maniera di fare*, the way in which they designed, composed, and finished their respective works.

If according to these records Apelles' is said to have challenged nature by his picture of a naked Hero; the like may be said of the sculptor of the Alexander, (No. 45. 1.) and of the *Miles de Rupe descendens*, (No. 38. 1.) in the DELECTUS. If Praxiteles transfused into his marble-works the very passions of the human heart\*, so too did the Gem-engraver into Laocoon's face on the Amethyst, (No. 25. Vol. 1.) and into the looks of the Soldiers defending their wounded Comrade on the Cornelian, (No. 41. Vol. 1.) If Aristides the Theban painted the inmost character of man, and brought out his very feelings and moral habits', so too did Calphurnius Felix on his Intaglio of Ulysses in angry remonstrance with Diomedes about the Palladium, (No. 39. 1.) If there was so much poetry in the designs of the painter Timanthes, that his works indicated much more than they exhibited, (his genius disdaining the trammels of art\*),

Instances from Pliny of similarity of manner between Gems in the DELECTUS and the large works of the celebrated masters of antiquity.

\* Apelles pinxit Heroa nudum, eâque picturâ naturam ipsam provocavit. Plin. lib. xxxv. c. 10.

\* Ο καταμίξας ἄκρως τοῖς λιθινοῖς ἐργοῖς τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς πάθη. Diodorus Siculus.

\* Aristides Thebanus omnium primus animam pinxit, et sensus omnes expressit quos vocant Græci ᾤθη. Plin. lib. xxxv. c. 10.

\* In omnibus ejus operibus intelligitur plus semper quam pingitur et cum ars summa sit, ingenium tamen ultra artem est. Plin. lib. xxxv. c. 10.

same happy manner of leaving it to the feeling and the fancy of the beholder to supply what was intended but not expressed, is discovered in the Cornelian Intaglio (No. 46. 1.) of Æneas rescued by Apollo from the hands of Diomede, wherein nothing of the fugitive is seen but his leg and thigh, his head and body having passed through a door-way behind his protector, whilst Diomede in his disappointment is seen fiercely cutting right and left with his sword. And lastly, if Apelles remarked of the painters of his age, that they were all deficient in the graceful, he himself being a perfect example of it\*, the same gracefulness which he so much admired, recommended, and adopted, is in an eminent degree impressed upon the whole composition of Tryphon's Cameo, the finest piece of minute workmanship in the world, (No 50. 1.) the subject of which, (the marriage of Cupid and Psyche,) far surpasses in delicate expression, simplicity of design, and graceful *ordonnance*, the drawing of Raffaelle on the same subject†.

Such being, (to use a Plinian expression,) *Harum Gemmarum Nobilitates*, it is due to those studies of the antique which are in the present day so zealously and successfully pursued, and to the Work itself

\* Præcipua ejus in arte venustas fuit, cum eadem ætate maximi pictores essent, quorum opera cum admiraretur collaudatis omnibus deesse iis unam illam Venerem dicebat quam Græci χαρὰ vocant, cætera omnibus contigisse sed hac soli sibi neminem parem. Plin. lib. xxxv. c. 10.

† See Landon's gravures au trait of Raffaelle's Works, Planche No. 101.

which gives the results of so much laborious research and beautiful and truthful delineation, it is due to the taste, talents, and indefatigable attention of the able men and accomplished artists employed upon the literary and pictorial departments of the undertaking, but it is due in an especial manner to the posthumous fame and honour of the Nobleman who devoted his time, purse, solicitude, to the splendid as well as erudite preparation of the Work, that it should be published and become an article of purchase, not merely reprinted for honorary presents to friends and favoured individuals as in 1783. Without disparage-  
 ment or derogation to any particular persons, acts, or things, in those days, it must be admitted, that a spirit of exclusiveness extensively prevailed; persons piqued themselves too much upon the possession of things rare and sanspareil, it might be a book or a picture, not because it had any particular merit as a work of art, science, or learning, but because it was unique; the same spirit was apt to manifest itself under a variety of forms, but under none more adverse to the spread of knowledge than the printing, but not publishing, volumes which, though containing much useful and interesting information, were withheld from all purchasers, as if to enhance their value as presentation-copies, and to increase the obligation upon those who received them. Such was the practice, and such the spirit, of an age not sufficiently alive to the patriotic duties of propagating learning, helping study, cultivating taste, and promoting social happiness, by a liberal interchange and common use of the means and instruments of knowledge. In the

The love of  
exclusive  
possession  
which for-  
merly pre-  
vailed.



instance of the *DELECTUS* the prevailing spirit of the times was manifested in the scanty number of copies worked off by the unknown Press which produced them, for no printer's name is to be found in any part of the work ; one hundred sets (2 vols. folio to each set) were all the proceeds which sprung out of years of study and research, pictorial and chalcographic labour, a boundless expenditure of money, and a happy combination of every thing that could make a work valuable. But better things may be expected from the liberality which characterizes science and the scientific, literature and the literati, the fine arts and the lovers and professors of them, in the present day ; costly productions of the press, fine specimens of ancient and modern art, have now become accessible to all, not only as sights for admiration, but as matters of study for improvement. The like results may be hoped for in respect of the publication of the *DELECTUS* from that taste for painting, sculpture, architecture, which the present Duke of Marlborough has shewn in the judicious reparations and elegant improvements of his Palace. They may be expected from his Grace's large and liberal spirit of enquiry which seeks for information, wherever it may be found, from his love of literature, and from the comprehensive attention he bestows upon all works of art and many departments of science, especially the practical parts of chemistry, astronomy, and agriculture.

Things appertaining and subsidiary to the improvement of the fine arts ought to be made public; they are a sort of public property.

It is said by the Latin Historiographer of the fine arts and celebrated artists, that a painter is the common property of the world, *Pictor res communis*

*terrarum erat*'. The same may be said of paintings, engravings, and books, exhibiting works of art, or occupied upon the means of their improvement; such things should be considered common property, and made so by publication, if books, and by public exhibition, if specimens of superior workmanship.

To the like effect may be also adduced from the same author a reference which he makes to a speech of Marcus Agrippa, which speech he calls magnificent, and well worthy of the first of Rome's citizens; the object of that speech was to establish and recommend the patriotic duty of publishing, that is of dedicating to the eye and inspection of the public, all Collections of pictures and statues'. Upon which Pliny himself observes, that this would be a far better practice than that which prevailed in his time, the practice of banishing them to the seclusion and secrecy of country houses. Here too is advocated the same principle which it has been the object of the writer to recommend, that of making the public, and herein the men of taste, the lovers of the fine arts, all engaged upon works of art, professionally or nonprofessionally, partakers of the pleasure and benefit of beholding things beautiful, whether painted, sculptured, or cast, whether copied as drawings or engravings, whether printed as precious volumes or erected as splendid galleries of art. The principles involved in Agrippa's oration,

Pliny and Agrippa in favour of giving publicity to works of art for the benefit and pleasure of the public.

' Plin. xxxv. c. 10.

\* Extat certe ejus oratio magnifica, et maximo civium digna de tabulis omnibus, signisque *publicandis*—quod fieri satius fuisset quam in villarum exilia pelli. Plin. lib. xxxv. c. 4.

and Pliny's dicta, are respectfully pressed upon the attention of the noble possessor of the copyright of the DELECTUS, in the hope that His Grace may apply them in such a manner as to make these engravings and descriptions of some of the finest of the Gem-sculptures of the Marlborough Collection accessible to the bookseller and the buyer, to the intent that they may become available for the purposes so truly and so eloquently set forth by Mariette\*, *Heureux celui qui envisage ces précieux restes de l'antiquité avec de telles dispositions, ils seront pour lui la source d'une infinité de connoissances, ils perfectionneront le goût et sans qu'il s'en apperçoive, son imagination se meublera des idées les plus nobles.*

A LOVER OF THE FINE ARTS. .

*V. R. Thomas. C.C.C.*

\* *Traité des Pierres gravées, Tome i. p. 34.*





